



TRANSLATIONS
OF
CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

ST. AMBROSE
"ON THE MYSTERIES"
AND THE TREATISE
ON THE SACRAMENTS

T. THOMPSON, B.D.
& J. H. BRAWLEY, D.D.



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TRANSLATIONS OF CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

SERIES III

LITURGICAL TEXTS

GENERAL EDITOR : C. L. FELTOE, D.D.

ST. AMBROSE
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“ON THE SACRAMENTS”
BY AN UNKNOWN AUTHOR

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ON THE SACRAMENTS
BY AN UNKNOWN AUTHOR

TRANSLATED BY
T. THOMPSON, B.D.
EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION & NOTES
By J. H. SRAWLEY, D.D.

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE translation of the two treatises contained in the present volume was undertaken by the Rev. T. Thompson at the request of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and was in preparation at the time of his death in the spring of 1917. Mr. Thompson had for some years contemplated the preparation of an edition of the original text of the treatise *On the Sacraments*, and had dealt with some of the liturgical problems involved in both treatises in his valuable little book *On the Offices of Baptism and Confirmation*, in the *Cambridge Handbooks of Liturgical Study*. To that book the present editor has made constant reference in preparing the Introduction and Notes.

The manuscript of the translation left by Mr. Thompson was complete as far as Book vi, ch. 2, §9 of the work *On the Sacraments*. The remaining sections have been translated by Mr. F. H. Colson, late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, who has also assisted in the revision of the whole translation and contributed suggestions towards the interpretation of various passages. Some notes on the treatise *On the Mysteries*, which appear to have been intended for publication, have been incorporated and bear the initial [T]. Use has also been made of the materials collected by Mr. Thompson for notes on the second of the treatises here translated. To

Mr. W. C. Bishop I am indebted for some helpful suggestions, and for allowing me to consult him on some points connected with the system of lessons at Milan. To Dr. H. J. White, of King's College, London, I owe a similar debt of gratitude for information with regard to the text of the Biblical quotations in the treatises. The Index has been prepared by Mrs. Thompson.

The task of preparing this little volume for the Press has been welcomed by the present editor as enabling him to offer a small tribute of affection and esteem for one whose friendship recalls, amid other happy memories, a common association in those liturgical and patristic studies with which the present volume is concerned.

J. H. S.

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INTRODUCTION

I. ON CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION

THE two treatises contained in the present volume, apart from their importance to the student of Christian worship and doctrines, possess this further source of interest, that they illustrate the care of the ancient Church for the adequate instruction of those who were admitted to Christian baptism. Each of them consists of addresses given in Easter week to those who had been baptized on Easter Eve. But they presuppose a longer course of instruction which had been carried on throughout Lent, and to this previous instruction Ambrose refers in the opening words of the treatise *On the Mysteries*. The origin of this system of instruction goes back to the early days of the Church, and the word "catechumen" applied to one who had attached himself to the Church and was undergoing such instruction has its origin in the New Testament.¹ As the Church grew in numbers and influence, and its converts were in most cases adults, increasing importance was attached to this side of its activity. The famous school of Alexandria, of which Pantaenus, Clement, and Origen were the most notable heads, represents that activity in its most splendid and striking form. Under their leadership it attracted the more thoughtful and intelligent classes

¹ The word *κατηχεῖν* ("to instruct") is found in Lk. i. 4; Acts xviii. 25; 1 Cor. xiv. 19; Gal. vi. 6. From it are derived the words *catechism*, *catechise*.

of converts, and developed into a school of Christian philosophy and learning. But in a simpler form the same kind of instruction was going on throughout the Church, and the discipline and training to which converts were subjected before they were admitted to baptism is reflected not only in the series of Church Orders, which give directions for the preliminaries of baptism, but also in the liturgical books which deal with the ordering of Christian worship. The central act of worship, the Eucharist, was divided into two parts. The *missa catechumenorum*, consisting of lessons, psalms, homily, and prayers, was open to all, baptized and unbaptized, alike. The *missa fidelium*, or Eucharist proper, was the special privilege of the baptized. The conversion of the Empire flooded the Church with a number of converts, many of whom were Christian only in name, and were unwilling to take upon themselves the full obligations of the Christian life involved in baptism. Crowds flocked into the ranks of the catechuminate, but many stopped there, and the evil custom became prevalent of postponing as long as possible the reception of baptism. The Emperor Constantine was baptized on his death-bed. Augustine, though admitted to the catechuminate as a boy, is another example of one whose baptism was long deferred. Corresponding to these changed conditions we find that the Church in the fourth century, unable to cope with the great crowd of catechumens, reserved the full and complete instruction to those catechumens who expressed their intention of presenting themselves for baptism. The duration of this instruction, of which in the earlier period we have no clear indications, became generally fixed to the season of Lent, the baptism itself taking place on Easter Eve.¹ The importance of this

¹ Easter and the season between Easter and Pentecost were recognized times for baptism in the days of Tertullian (*de Bapt.*,

work of instruction was such that leading bishops of the Church engaged in it themselves, and also wrote treatises intended for the guidance of catechists. We have examples of these latter in Augustine's work *de catechizandis rudibus* and in the *Catechetical Oration* of Gregory of Nyssa. The best known example of the actual instruction given is the *Catecheses* of Cyril of Jerusalem. Other examples may be found among the sermons of Chrysostom, in those of Augustine to candidates for baptism (*ad competentes*) and to the newly-baptized (*ad infantes*), and in the addresses of Gaudentius of Brescia to neophytes.

The names of those who expressed their intention of offering themselves for baptism were given in at the beginning of Lent (cp. *de Sacram.* iii. 2.12), and henceforth they were known as *competentes*, or at Rome *electi*, while the corresponding term in the East was οἱ φωτιζόμενοι ("those who are being illuminated"). At Milan, during Lent, Ambrose daily instructed the candidates in Christian morals and the elements of religion (*de Myst.* i. 1), and many of his extant sermons, based upon the books of Scripture read during Lent, are of this character. Thus Ambrose tells us, in the passage just cited, that in Lent the lives of the patriarchs (Genesis) and the precepts of Proverbs were read, and his own sermons *On Abraham* contain references which show that they were intended for candidates for baptism.¹

19). In the East the Epiphany was also commonly set apart for this purpose, and there are traces of the same custom in Gaul and Spain. See W. C. Bishop in *Journ. of Theol. Studies* (1909) pp. 127 f. On the connexion between the preparation for baptism and the forty days of Lent see Thompson, *Offices of Baptism and Conf.* pp. 19 f., and Brightman in *Essays on Early Church and Ministry* (ed. Swete), pp. 340 f.

¹ See *de Abraham*. I. 4, 25 : viri, maxime qui ad gratiam domini tenditis ; 7.59 : qui ad gratiam baptismatis tenditis ; cf. 9.89.

The services at which these lessons were read and the instructions were given were undoubtedly the *missae catechumenorum*, of which we find survivals in the later Milanese books, *i. e.* the *Manuale* (cent. x) and the *Ordo* of Beroldus (cent. xii). From these sources we learn that they were held at the third and ninth hours on week-days in Lent, except on Saturday, when the "scrutinies" were held. (See W. C. Bishop, *Ch. Quart. Review*, lxxii (1911), pp. 56 f.)

Of these "scrutinies," or examinations of the candidates to test their fitness for baptism, which find a place in the references of Augustine and in the later liturgical books of Rome and Milan, there is no mention in the two treatises contained in this volume. Nor do they refer in express terms to the "delivery of the Creed" (*traditio symboli*), which formed an important part of the preparation of candidates in the West. Elsewhere, however (*Ep.* xx. 4. 6), Ambrose tells us that this delivery of the Creed took place on the Sunday before Easter. This ceremony illustrates another feature in the discipline of the early Church, its reserve in imparting the most sacred truths and mysteries of the Christian religion. This reserve, to which in later times was given the name *disciplina arcana*, was partly due to motives of reverence, and was suggested by Mt. vii. 6. It was also due to the sound educational principle that truth must be conveyed gradually and adapted to the circumstances and apprehension of the hearers.¹ At Rome, somewhat later, a like reserve was practised with regard to the delivery and exposition of the Gospels, for at Rome the catechumens were dismissed before the reading of the Gospel at Mass, though this was not the case at Milan. The Lord's Prayer came under the same reserve, and was delivered and expounded to the candidates, at Rome

¹ Both principles are stated by Ambrose, *Exp. in Luc.* vi. 105.

before baptism, at Milan, if we may regard *de Sacram.* as evidence, in Easter week.¹

Of the whole of this preparatory stage the two treatises included in this volume supply only fragmentary evidence, and of the rites which accompanied it they reveal little or nothing. On the rites of baptism their information is full, and on the lessons read, and the instructions given, in Easter week, when the training of the candidates was completed, they throw a flood of light. It was during this period that the instruction on the Sacraments and the Lord's Prayer was given. The *Catecheses* of Cyril of Jerusalem show a similar practice. On the other hand, at Hippo in Africa in the time of Augustine the instruction appears to have been completed in the main before baptism, though Easter week was still devoted to further addresses to the candidates, in which they were exhorted to perseverance. See Aug., *Sermons*, ccxxiv.—ccxxviii. (*ad Infantes*).

This practice of postponing instruction on the Sacraments until after Baptism and Communion is justified by Ambrose on two grounds (*de Myst.* i. 2). (1) To disclose the mysteries to those who were as yet uninitiated would be the betrayal of a sacred trust. (2) It is better to let the light of the mysteries make its own appeal to those who come fresh to them than to introduce them by a discourse.

With the widespread growth of infant baptism this elaborate system of catechetical instruction became unmeaning, and after the sixth century it tended to disappear, though traces of it survived, and the liturgical books, both in the rites of Baptism and the Eucharist, bear clear marks of its influence.

¹ On the practice at Rome and in Africa see T. Thompson, *Offices of Baptism and Confirmation*, pp. 112 f.

II. CHARACTER, AUTHORSHIP, AND DATE OF THE TREATISE "ON THE MYSTERIES" (*de Mysteriis*)

The treatise *On the Mysteries* bears the name of St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, who played so large a part in the history of the Western Church in the last quarter of the fourth century. It consists of addresses to the newly-baptized in Easter week. The author expounds the ceremonies connected with Baptism, and illustrates its doctrinal significance from the Old and New Testaments. He next shows the superiority of the Eucharist to the sacraments of the Old Testament, and attributes the gift of Christ's Body and Blood to the operative power of Christ's words of institution, finding illustrations of his theme in the miracles of the Old Testament and in the Incarnation. After dwelling on the benefits and fruits of Communion he encourages the newly-baptized to believe in the certainty and power of the new life given in Baptism. At two points Ambrose introduces a mystical commentary on certain chapters of the Song of Songs, which is employed to illustrate the joy of the Church presented to the Bridegroom in all the purity and glory of baptismal grace (vii. 33-41), and again, to show the wonder and joy of the divine feast spread by Christ (ix. 55-58). This use of the Song of Songs Ambrose derived, like so much else in his teaching, from Greek sources. The mystical interpretation of the Song of Songs, which appears to have been the interpretation given to it by those who assigned it a place in the Jewish Canon of Scripture, first found clear expression in the Church in Origen's commentary on the book. Origen was followed by Methodius in his *Banquet of the Virgins*, and later on by Gregory of Nyssa. Through Ambrose it passed into the West, and later on found expression in the writings of St. Bernard. To Origen also is

due the idea that the imagery of the Song may be applied either to the Church or to the individual soul (*de Myst.* vii. 37; cf. *de Sacram.* v. 2. 7 f.). This mystical use of the Song recurs constantly in the writings of Ambrose (see e.g. *de Isaac et anima* (*passim*); *de Institutione Virginis*; *de Obitu Valentini*, cc. 59 f.).

The authenticity of the treatise *On the Mysteries* was vigorously contested in the controversy between Catholics and Protestants during the Reformation period. Some of the objections were trivial and dealt with the author's interpretation of particular passages of Scripture (e.g. Jn. v. 7 in *de Myst.* iv. 24). Daillé (*de Confirmatione*, 1659) maintained that Ambrose could not possibly have attributed to the "feet-washing" the sacramental significance given to it in *de Myst.* vi. 32 (on this see note on the passage). The teaching of the author on the subject of the Eucharist was appealed to in support of the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and this led to the further objection by Protestant writers that such teaching could not possibly have come from Ambrose. This latter objection has been revived in recent times by Loofs,¹ who maintains that Ambrose in his genuine works nowhere affirms the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist. But it cannot be said that he has made out a convincing case, or that the sharp contrast which he draws between the language of Ambrose in this treatise and in *de Fide* (iv. 10. 124) and *Enarr. in Ps. xxxviii.* 25 is justified.²

¹ Loofs, art. "Abendmahl" in Hauck-Hertzog, *Realencyklopädie*; also *Leitfaden z. Studium der Dogmengesch.*, pp. 470 f.

² In the passage *de Fide* l.c. Ambrose says: "As often as we receive the sacraments, which by the mystery of the sacred prayer are transformed (*transfigurantur*) into the flesh and the blood, we proclaim the Lord's death." Here *transfigurare* appears to be a synonym of *convertere*, *mutare*, which are used in *de Myst.* to describe the "change" of the elements. Loofs would qualify this language by reference to the second passage cited above from the

On the other hand, there are many points of contact between the present treatise and other works of Ambrose. As we have seen, the mystical use of the Song of Songs is found elsewhere in Ambrose, and the sacramental efficacy which the author finds in the "feet-washing" may be paralleled from other writings of Ambrose (see note on *de Myst.* vi. 32). There are also echoes in the treatise of the two works of Ambrose *de Spiritu sancto* and *de Institutione Virginis*.¹ In the opening words of the treatise the author refers to the daily sermons which he had preached on "right conduct" during Lent, when the lives of the patriarchs were read. The sermons of Ambrose *On Abraham* (Book I.) correspond exactly to this description. They were addressed to candidates for baptism, and they deal with questions of conduct. The date of the treatise in that case would be about A.D. 387, to which year the treatise *On Abraham* is assigned.

III. CHARACTER, AUTHORSHIP, AND DATE OF THE TREATISE "ON THE SACRAMENTS" (*de Sacramentis*)

The treatise *On the Sacraments* consists of six sermons delivered to the newly-baptized in Easter week. They deal with Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, the Lord's Prayer, and Prayer. The work is nearly related to *de Mysteriis*, which it closely follows, embodying and expanding most of its contents. Its description of the rites of baptism is at times more exact than that of *de Mysteriis*, and it quotes several of the actual formu-

Commentary on Ps. xxxviii, where Ambrose speaks of the offering of the body of Christ on earth (in the Eucharist) as a "symbol" (*imago*) of a heavenly reality.

¹ Cf. *de Myst.* vii. 35, *de Spir. s.* ii. 10. 112; *de Myst.* vii. 41, 42, *de Spir. s.* i. 6. 71, 72; *de Myst.* ix. 51, *de Spir. s.* iii. 4. 22; *de Myst.* vii. 37, *de Inst. Virg.* i. 4; *de Myst.* vii. 40, *de Inst. Virg.* i. 5; *de Myst.* vii. 41, *de Inst. Virg.* xvii. 113.

laries employed, where they are either merely referred to, or passed over, in the earlier work.¹ The author supplements the account of the "feet-washing" contained in his source by a statement that it is not practised at Rome, and while expressing his desire to follow in all respects the pattern of the Roman Church, he vindicates in this respect the custom of his own Church (iii. 1. 5-6). On the Eucharist he gives much fuller information than Ambrose. Not only does he refer to the prayers preceding the Canon (iv. 4. 14), but he quotes a considerable portion of the Canon itself, as well as the doxology at the close of the Lord's Prayer (iv. 5. 21-23; iv. 6. 26-27; vi. 5. 24). The exposition of the Lord's Prayer in Book V. is not found in *de Mysteriis*, nor is the description of the parts of prayer (vi. 5. 22 f.), which is modelled on Ambrose, *de Inst. Virg.* ii. 8-10. With these exceptions the treatise for the most part reproduces the contents of *de Myst.* But though the author has made free use of the materials of the earlier work, his style is different from that of Ambrose. He frequently introduces his point by a short question, a rhetorical device very sparingly used by Ambrose. He nowhere rises to the spiritual fervour exhibited by Ambrose in *de Myst.* vi. 29 (with its personal address to our Lord). Moreover, he shows occasionally his independence of the earlier work, rearranging its material, omitting or expanding particular points, and sometimes developing the ideas suggested by a passage of Scripture quoted in his source (cp. e.g. the application of Eccl. ii. 14 in *de Myst.* vi. 30 and *de Sacram.* iii. 1. 1). In the treatment of the doctrinal significance of the "feet-washing" he silently corrects the conclusions of Ambrose

¹ Cf. e.g. *de Myst.* ii. 5, *de Sacr.* i. 2; *de Myst.* iii. 8, *de Sacr.* i. 5. 18, ii. 5. 14; *de Myst.* v. 28, *de Sacr.* ii. 7. 20; *de Myst.* vi. 29, *de Sacr.* ii. 7. 24; *de Myst.* vii. 41, 42, *de Sacr.* iii. 2. 8, 10; vi. 2. 6-8.

(*de Myst.* vi. 32 ; *de Sacram.* iii. 1. 7). In his eucharistic teaching he follows Ambrose in his assertion of the operative power of the word of Christ in changing the elements into the body and blood of Christ. But he goes further than Ambrose in his recoil from the materialistic conclusions that might be drawn from this doctrine, and in so doing he falls back on the earlier language which speaks of receiving "the likeness of the death" and "drinking the likeness of the blood," and comes very near to conceiving of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist as a presence of grace and power only (iv. 4. 20 ; vi. 1. 3. See further, p. xxxvii below). In the passage iii. 2. 13 f. he may possibly have in view the Pelagian denial of original sin, in which case we have an indication that the author is later than Ambrose. If, further, the reference to the Greek custom of communicating once a year (v. 4. 25) is due to acquaintance with Chrysostom's homilies (see note, *l.c.*), we have a further indication of late date. Lastly, it is improbable that Ambrose would have so closely copied an earlier work of his own.

Like *de Myst.*, this treatise came prominently into notice in connexion with the controversies between Catholics and Protestants at the time of the Reformation. Its authenticity was attacked by Bullinger, by Aubertin (whose verdict was "He is the ape of Ambrose"), and by Daillé. Aubertin assigned it to the seventh century, Daillé to the eighth. Doubts were also expressed on the opposite side by Cardinal Bona and the Benedictine editors. Various theories have been propounded as to the authorship. Tillemont's suggestion of Maximus of Turin has gained little credence. It has been revived in recent times by Schermann (*Röm. Quartalschrift*, xvii. (1903), 254 f.), who points out that in the oldest MS. of *de Sacram.* the book follows immediately the *Homilies*

of Maximus. Another theory, advanced by Probst (*Lit. des viert. Jahrh.*, p. 239) and Dom Morin (*Revue bénéd.* (1894) xi. 343 f.), is that the book was compiled from notes taken by those who had heard the sermons of Ambrose. But this theory fails to explain the peculiar characteristics which distinguish it from the genuine works of Ambrose. The question of authorship therefore remains open.

As to date, the presence of the treatise in the St. Gall MS. 188 of the seventh century, shows that it must be earlier than that period. Other indications are supplied by the fact that the treatise presupposes a condition of Church life in which adult baptism was still the rule, and in which baptism was normally celebrated at Easter (see iv. 1. 2, note), while other passages imply that heathenism still flourished (vi. 4. 18; vi. 5. 21). The prayers quoted in iv. 5. 21-23; iv. 6. 26-27 are of an earlier type than the Roman Canon in the Gelasian Sacramentary (see below, pp. xxxii ff.). The writer refers to Arianism (vi. 2. 10; cp. v. 1. 1, note), and possibly to Pelagianism (iii. 2. 13 f.), though the indirect character of this latter reference suggests a date at which the controversy had not yet been fought out. A less certain indication of date is afforded by the character of the Scripture quotations, which present in the Old Testament a form of the Latin Version earlier than the Vulgate (see below, p. xlii). The writer shows respect for the Church of Rome, whose pattern and rule he expresses a desire to follow (iii. 1. 5), though he claims a certain degree of independence in the matter of the usages of his own Church. His attitude in fact suggests a position of affairs like that revealed in the letter of Pope Innocent I to Decentius (416 A.D.), in which the see of Rome was advancing its claims over other churches in the matter of liturgical conformity, no less than in

matters of discipline. These indications suggest a date in one of the earlier decades of the fifth century. The affinity of the rites of baptism with those of Milan, the resemblance of the Canon of the Mass to that of the Roman rite, and the author's attitude to Rome, suggest that he lived in some North Italian district closely associated with Milan on the one hand and Rome on the other. Duchesne (*Christian Worship*, Eng. tr., p. 177) suggests Ravenna.

The author is acquainted with other works of Ambrose, besides *de Mysteriis*. He makes use of the language of *de Officiis* in describing the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit (iii. 2. 9), and his discussion of the parts of prayer is, as we have seen, based on *de Institutione Virginis*. His treatment of prayer and the Lord's Prayer suggests that he was acquainted with Origen's treatise *de Oratone*. Elsewhere (ii. 6. 17, 19) his teaching echoes that of Greek Church writers (see notes).

The addresses, six in number, appear to have been begun on Tuesday in Easter week and concluded on the following Sunday. At the close of the fourth address (iv. 6. 29) the author expresses his intention to continue his discourses "to-morrow, Saturday, and on Sunday" (*crastina die, sabbato, et dominica*), where "Saturday" is in apposition to "to-morrow." But a misunderstanding of the words led to the idea that there were three more sermons to follow. Hence the St. Gall MS. divides the last book into two parts, beginning a new book with vi. 5. 25, obviously an unnatural division. Similarly, some MSS. of *de Mysteriis* describe that work as Book I. of *de Sacramentis*, and rearrange the numbering of the books of the latter treatise accordingly; while in one MS., after the present six books of the treatise, there appears, under the heading "Book VII.," a sermon found in the Appendix of Augustine's works (*Serm.* 247;

Migne, *P. L.* xxxviii. 2200), which is attributed to Ivo of Chartres.

IV. THE RITES OF BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

Both treatises contain much valuable information as to the baptismal rites current in the Churches from which they proceed, though of the period before baptism they say little. Reference has already been made to the preparatory instruction and the rites by which it was accompanied. (See *Introd.* § I.) For a general comparison and discussion of the various Western rites see T. Thompson, *Offices of Baptism and Confirmation*. Though the two treatises proceed from different Churches, they present, with some slight divergences, the same general type of rite, which exhibits many points of contact with the later Milanese rite, though the latter has been much transformed and rearranged (see Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 133 f.).

The order and contents of the rite represented in *de Mysteriis* and *de Sacramentis* may be summarised as follows—

1. The *Effeta* or “opening of the ears” took place, as at Rome, on Easter Eve. It was performed by touching the ears and nostrils (there is no mention of the use of saliva or oil), and was based upon the action of our Lord recorded in Mk. vii. 34. It was intended to symbolise the opening of the faculties to the fruitful reception of the Sacraments (*de Myst.* i. 3, 4; *de Sacram.* i. 1. 2). Later on, at Rome, this ceremony was connected with the “delivery of the Gospels,” a rite which is not found at Milan.

2. Unction at the font by priest and deacon (*de Sacram.* i. 2. 4; not mentioned in *de Myst.*). This, too, is found in the Roman rite, but is not in the later Milanese forms. As it is not mentioned by Ambrose,

it is perhaps a feature which the Church of the author of *de Sacramentis* had derived from Rome. It is found in the Bobbio Missal, which also shows Roman influences. The author of *de Sacram.* describes it as the anointing of the Christian athlete for "the contest of the world." At Rome the unction was made on the back and the breast.

3. The renunciations (*de Myst.* ii. 5-7; iii. 8; *de Sacram.* i. 2. 5). The account of *de Sacram.* is fuller and more exact, and shows that the renunciations were twofold, *i.e.* "Dost thou renounce the devil and his works?", "Dost thou renounce the world and its pleasures?", to each of which questions the answer was given "I renounce." Then follows the admonition "Be mindful of thy words, and never let the contents of thy bond pass from thy memory"—which reappears as a formula in substantially the same words in the later Milanese books (see note). At Rome the renunciations were threefold; in the Gallican books a single renunciation is found. In this respect the later Milanese books remain faithful to the practice exhibited in *de Sacramentis*.

If we follow the reading suggested by Dom Morin in *de Myst.* ii. 7 (see note) the renunciation of the devil was accompanied at Milan by the dramatic ceremony of "spitting in his face," a practice which is found in some Eastern rites, though the evidence for the custom is of much later date than Ambrose.

4. The consecration of the font by the bishop (*de Myst.* iii. 8, 14; cf. iv. 20; *de Sacram.* i. 5. 18; ii. 5. 14). According to *de Myst.* this appears to have followed the renunciations, as Ambrose asserts that the bishop himself put the questions at the renunciation, though *de Sacram.* implies that this was done by the presbyter.¹

¹ For the order see *de Myst.* iii. 8. "What sawest thou? . . .

Our information as to the details of the consecration is derived almost entirely from *de Sacram.*, which speaks of an exorcism (as in the later Milanese and Gallican forms), and an invocation of the name of the Father and of the presence of the Son and the Holy Spirit (ii. 5. 14). To this latter feature there are no parallels in later forms. In *de Myst.* (iii. 14) there is added to these details the signing of the water with the Cross. There is no mention of the pouring of chrism into the font, as in the later Milanese and other Western rites.

5. The descent into the font ; the baptismal profession and immersions (*de Myst.* ii. 7, iv. 21, v. 28 ; *de Sacram.* ii. 7. 20). From *de Myst.* ii. 7 we learn that the candidate turned to the east for the baptismal profession. The form of the creed is given very fully in *de Sacram.* It consisted of three questions, "Dost thou believe in God the Father almighty?", "Dost thou believe in our Lord Jesus Christ *and in His Cross?*", "Dost thou believe also in the Holy Spirit?" To each question the candidate replied, "I believe," and an immersion followed each of the three responses. The immersion after each question is a feature found in many early rites ; but the addition of the words "*and His Cross*" to the second of the two questions is peculiar to these treatises. In the later Milanese books it has been replaced by the Roman form "who was born and suffered."

6. Unction of the head with chrism (*de Myst.* vi. 29, 30 ; *de Sacram.* ii. 7. 24). This, too, was performed by the bishop (*sacerdos* is used by both writers. See note *de Myst.* ii. 6, *de Sacram.* i. 1. 2). From *de Sacram.* iii. 1. 1 we learn that this was performed with chrism (μύρον).

the high priest questioning and consecrating." In *de Sacram.* i. 2. 4 (the unction before baptism) the only ministers mentioned are "levite" and "presbyter." The next section begins, without any reference to a change of subject, "When he asked thee Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works?" . . . etc.

The same author quotes the prayer used by the bishop, which resembles fairly closely the prayer found in the Gelasian Sacramentary in connexion with the post-baptismal unction at Rome, where, however, the minister was the presbyter, not, as here, the bishop (see Wilson, *Gel. Sacr.* p. 86). This unction of the head is interpreted in *de Sacram.* (iii. i. 1) as the enrichment of man's faculties by divine grace, whereas Ambrose (*de Myst.* vi. 30) sees in it a consecration of the newly baptized to their place in the priestly body of the Church.

7. The washing of the feet (*de Myst.* vi. 31-33; *de Sacram.* iii. i. 4-7). From *de Sacram.* it appears that the washing was begun by the bishop and completed by the presbyters. The author is aware that the rite was not practised by the Roman Church. It was current, however, in Africa, Spain, Gaul, and Ireland. It is mentioned in a canon of the Council of Elvira (c. 48) at the beginning of the fourth century, and is found in the service books of Gallican and Irish origin (*Missale Gothicum*, *Miss. Gallicanum vetus*, Bobbio and Stowe Missals), as well as in the later Ambrosian rite, represented in the *Manuale Ambrosianum* and Beroldus.

To this ceremony Ambrose (*de Myst.* vi. 32) appears to assign the same sacramental efficacy with regard to inherited sin as he assigns to baptism with regard to actual sin. The author of *de Sacramentis* silently corrects this teaching by affirming that all sins are washed away in baptism. He sees, however, in the rite a means of sanctification and a lesson in humility. Augustine (*Ep.* lv. (*ad Januar.*) 33) was faced with the danger of attaching to the rite an exaggerated value, and replied that the ceremony was a type of humility, but formed no part of the sacrament of baptism.

8. The vesting with white robes (*de Myst.* vii. 34 ;

alluded to in *de Sacram.* iv. 2. 5-6; v. 3. 14 *familia candidata*). This custom is found both in East and West during the fourth century. It appears in the earlier Roman rite (John the Deacon), in Spain in the *Liber Ordinum* (which contains much ancient material), in the *Missale Gothicum* and the Bobbio Missal. The memory of the custom survives in the Roman books in the titles of some of the prayers for Easter week and its octave (e.g. *totius albae orationes* (*Gelasian Sacr.*, Wilson, p. 91); *feria ii. in albas, die dominico post albas* (*Gregorian Sacr.*, Wilson (H. B. S.), pp. 60, 65)).

9. The "spiritual seal" (*de Myst.* vii. 41-42; *de Sacram.* iii. 2. 8-10; vi. 2. 6-8). To this rite *de Sacram.* also gives the title *perfectio*, as being the "completion" of baptism. Both writers speak of it as "a signing,"¹ and connect with it the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit. The evidence of *de Myst.* alone might lead us to suppose that the "spiritual seal" is identical with the unction of vi. 29, and that Ambrose is led to speak of it as "the spiritual seal" because of the order in which the "seal" is mentioned in the Song of Songs which he is expounding (see vii. 41); but the evidence of *de Sacramentis* shows that the two are plainly distinct. While the significance of the rite is plainly the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit (and hence it may be said to correspond to the rite of "Confirmation") the connexion of the rite with the preceding unction after baptism is not clearly indicated, nor is its outward form described. One view is that the unction after baptism marked the beginning of the rite of confirmation, which was completed by the subsequent "signing" or "seal" (cf. Dom de Puniet, art. "Confirmation" in Cabrol, *Dict. d'arch.*

¹ The words used of it in *de Myst.* vii. 42 are: "God the Father hath sealed thee, Christ the Lord hath confirmed thee, and hath given the earnest of the Spirit in thy heart." This is based on 2 Cor. i. 21, 22.

et de lit. chrét., col. 2532). On the other hand, the author of *de Sacram.* (iii. 1. 1) after referring to the unction and explaining its significance, concludes: "This is called regeneration," thus seeming to connect it with the preceding rite of baptism.

As to the outward form of the rite, there is no mention of unction or the laying on of hands, but only of a "signing." Nor is Ambrose more explicit in *de Spir. s.* i. 6. 72, where, referring to the "spiritual seal," he says, "though we are signed on the body outwardly, in reality we are signed in heart." At Rome, in the time of Pope Innocent I. (about A.D. 416), the rite took the form of an unction on the forehead made with chrism by the bishop, while the previous unction after baptism was assigned to the priest. The Ambrosian sacramentaries of the ninth and tenth centuries exhibit only one unction after baptism (for the later history at Milan see Thompson, *op. cit.* p. 137). As both *de Myst.* and *de Sacram.* rehearse in full the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit when speaking of the rite, it might be inferred that a prayer was used resembling that in the Roman order of confirmation (Wilson, *Gelasian Sacramentary*, p. 87), but there is no allusion to such a prayer in the later *Manuale Ambrosianum* nor in Beroldus (cf. Thompson, *op. cit.* p. 138).

10. The procession to the altar followed upon the completion of the rites described above (*de Myst.* viii. 43; *de Sacram.* iii. 2. 13; iv. 2. 5, 7; iv. 3. 8). Both writers refer in this connexion to Psalms xliii. and xxiii., which may have been sung as introductory chants (though the use of Psalm xliii. in the preparatory portion of the Roman Mass (and of the Ambrosian) is of later origin).¹

¹ The treatise *de Lapsu Virginis*, which, though not probably the work of Ambrose, has been thought by Dom Morin to be based on addresses by Ambrose (*Revue bénéd.* (1897) xiv. 196) speaks of lights borne by the neophytes (v. 19).

From Ambrose (*in Psalm cxviii.* prol. 2) it would appear that, though the newly-baptized communicated along with the faithful, they did not take part in the people's offering of bread and wine before the octave of Easter.

During Easter week the instructions on the sacraments were given. In the later Ambrosian books mention is made of *missae pro baptizatis*, which were celebrated during the week-days of Easter week, and were distinct from the *missae* attended by the general body of the faithful. These latter were celebrated in a different church and at a later hour. But beyond references to the lessons read at the services at which the instructions were given, the present treatises throw no light on the character of the services in Easter week.

V. THE LESSONS FROM THE SCRIPTURES

There are several references to the lessons from Scripture read in Church in both treatises. In the case of *de Sacram.* especially these are often quite explicit, and from them and the less clearly defined statements in *de Myst.* we can form some idea of their order and contents. Their evidence shows that certain books were already assigned to particular seasons, and that the beginnings of a fixed course of lessons for the more important seasons of the Church had already been made. It will be sufficient here briefly to indicate the facts and to adduce parallels with the later system of lessons exhibited in the *Manuale Ambrosianum* of the tenth century, noting any approximations already made in the two treatises to this later system. Such parallels can only yield results of varying and unequal value. In some cases they point to a real connexion between the earlier and the later practice. Others are merely interesting "attestations," while others again (*e. g.* some

of those cited under III.) are of interest as showing the kind of teaching which was associated with the passages and led to their finding a place in the Milanese cycle of lessons.

I. In *de Myst.* i. 1, Ambrose speaks of lessons from the lives of the patriarchs and from Proverbs as being read during Lent. This corresponds to the later Milanese practice found in the *Manuale*, in which lessons from Genesis and Proverbs were read at the *missae catechumenorum* at the third and ninth hours each week-day in Lent, except Saturdays.¹ From Ambrose, *Ep.* xx. 14, 25 we learn that in Holy Week it was the established custom to read lessons from the books of Job and Jonah,² and both books find a place in the course of lessons prescribed in the *Manuale* for the first four days of Holy Week.³ From *de Myst.* vi. 31 (cf. *de Sacram.* iii. 1. 4) it would appear that John xiii. 4 f. was read at the time of the washing of the feet of the newly-baptized (in the *Manuale* it is appointed for the mass of the newly-baptized on Saturday in Easter week). For the services of Easter week, at which the addresses in *de Sacram.* were given, the author supplies the following facts. In the second address (ii. 2. 3; cf. *de Myst.* iv. 22) he speaks of John v. 4 f. as being read "yesterday." In the same book (ii. 7. 23) he refers to Rom. vi. 3 as being read in "the lesson for the day" (*in lectione praesenti*). In the third address (iii. 2. 8) he alludes to the "spiritual

¹ For details see footnotes to the services in Lent in Magistretti's edition of the *Manuale*, and on these *missae catechumenorum* see W. C. Bishop, *Ch. Quart. Review*, lxxii. (1911), pp. 56 f.

² The words of Ambrose are: *audistis . . . librum Job legi, qui solemnī munere est decursus et tempore (§ 14) . . . Sequenti die lectus est de more liber Jonae (§ 25).*

³ Ambrose speaks of the book of Job as read on the Monday, Jonah (apparently) on the Wednesday. In the *Manuale* Job is read, along with Tobit, on the first three week-days in Holy Week, and the lesson from Jonah is on Maundy Thursday.

seal" of which they had heard in the lesson for the day. The reference is to 2 Cor. i. 21 f., as is shown by the parallel section *de Myst.* vii. 42, where that passage is spoken of as having been read "in the lesson from the Apostle" (*apostolica lectione*). In the sixth address (vi. 2. 9) the passage 1 Cor. xii. 4 f. is said to have been read "the day before yesterday" (*nudius tertius*).

As we have seen (§ iii. p. xx), the addresses contained in *de Sacram.* began on Tuesday in Easter week, and ended on the following Sunday. The following table shows the lessons read on the first four days, and the corresponding days on which the same chapters appear in the system of lessons found in the *Manuale*.

	<i>de Sacram.</i>	<i>Manuale Ambros.</i> (ed. Magistretti)
John v. (the paralytic)	Tuesday	Tuesday (mass for newly-baptized).
Rom. vi. 4 f.	Wednesday	Monday (mass for people).
2 Cor. i. 21 f. (cf. <i>de Myst.</i> vii. 42)	Thursday	—
1 Cor. xii.	Friday	Feast of Pentecost.

II. Three other lessons referred to in these treatises as read in Church, though the day is not indicated, find a place in the *Manuale* in connexion with the services of Lent or Easter week.

	<i>Manuale Ambros.</i>
John ix. (the man born blind) (<i>de Sacram.</i> iii. 2. 11)	iii rd S. in Lent (hence known as <i>Dominica de Caeco</i>).
Gen. xiv. (Melchizedek) (<i>de Myst.</i> viii. 45)	Friday in Easter week (mass for people).
2 Kings v. (Naaman) (<i>de Myst.</i> iii. 16)	Tuesday in Easter week (mass for people).

III. The following passages, commented on or alluded to, in illustration of the baptismal rites in these treatises,

though not referred to as actually read in Church, find a place among the lessons contained in the *Manuale*.

	<i>Manuale Ambros.</i>
Gen. i. (<i>de Myst.</i> iii. 9, <i>de Sacram.</i> iii. 1. 3)	Easter Vigil.
Gen. vi., vii. (Noah) (<i>de Myst.</i> iii. 10, <i>de Sacram.</i> i. 6. 23)	1st Tuesday in Lent Easter Eve (<i>missa catechumenorum</i> at third hour).
Exodus xiv. (the Red Sea) (<i>de Sacram.</i> i. 6. 20f.; cf. <i>de Myst.</i> ix. 51)	Easter Vigil.
Exodus xv. (Song of Moses) (<i>de Myst.</i> iii. 12)	Easter Vigil.
2 Kings vi. (the axe-head) (<i>de Sacram.</i> ii. 4. 11; cf. iv. 4. 18; <i>de Myst.</i> ix. 51)	Wednesday in Easter week (mass for people)
Isaiah xi. (the sevenfold gifts) (<i>de Myst.</i> vii. 42, <i>de Sacram.</i> iii. 2. 8)	Vigil of Pentecost.
John iii. 5 (the new birth) (<i>de Myst.</i> iv. 20)	Easter Vigil (mass for newly-baptized)
John vi. (the bread of life) (<i>de Sacram.</i> vi. 1. 2-4)	Thursday and Friday in Easter week (mass for newly-baptized).
1 Cor. x. 2f. (Israel in the wilderness) (<i>de Myst.</i> iii. 12f., viii. 49; <i>de Sacram.</i> i. 6. 20)	Wednesday in Easter week (mass for people).
1 Tim. ii. (<i>de Sacram.</i> vi. 3. 11; 5. 21-22)	Saturday in Easter week (mass for people).

VI. THE LITURGY

The interest of *de Sacramentis* is not limited to the light which it throws upon the baptismal rites of the Church from which it proceeds. It also supplies us with a series of prayers used in the Liturgy (see iv. 5. 21-23; 26, 27), which, when read consecutively, will be seen to exhibit a general correspondence in order and con-

tents with those of the Canon of the Roman Mass found in the Gelasian Sacramentary. According to Mr. E. Bishop (*J. Th. St.* iv. 568 f.), the text of the Canon represented in the Vatican MS. of the Gelasian Sacramentary is really "Gregorian," but for all practical purposes it may be held to represent the text current at Rome in the sixth century. When compared with this latter the prayers of *de Sacram.* are shown to contain much of the substance of the prayers *Quam oblationem*, *Qui pridie*, *Unde et memores*, *Supra quae*, and *Supplices te*, with some omissions, and, in the case of the last two prayers, with some transposition of order. There are many exact parallels of language, but also striking divergences.

1. The prayer (iv. 5. 21) corresponding to *Quam oblationem* (but beginning, "Make for us this oblation" (*Fac nobis hanc oblationem*)) contains, like that prayer, a petition that the oblation may be made "approved, ratified, reasonable, and acceptable," but whereas the Gelasian form goes on, "that it may become to us the body and blood of thy dearly beloved Son," *de Sacram.* has, "because it is the figure of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2. The commemoration of the institution (iv. 5. 21-23) begins, like the Gelasian form, with the words, "Who the day before he suffered" (*Qui pridie quam pateretur*), as distinct from the Eastern and Mozarabic forms, which follow 1 Cor. xi. 23. The actual recital of the institution shews many divergences from the Gelasian form (though parallels may be found to many of them in Eastern rites and the Ambrosian Sacramentary of Biasca (cent. x.)) and it lacks some of the characteristic features of the later Roman form.

3. The Anamnesis, corresponding to *Unde et memores*, is shorter than the Gelasian form, and exhibits some

notable differences of wording, including the phrases "reasonable offering," "unbloody offering" (see notes).

4. In place of *Supra quae* and *Supplices te*, in *de Sacram.* there is one prayer, in which the order of the contents of these two prayers is reversed, the reference to the gifts of Abel and the sacrifices of Abraham and Melchizedek following, instead of preceding, the prayer for the reception of the oblation "on the altar on high." In this latter petition in place of the single angel, by whose hands it is asked in the Gelasian prayer that the oblation may be received on the altar on high, we find the plural "angels," a feature which again has a parallel in some Eastern sources.¹

What is the origin of these prayers? Are they, as Duchesne suggests,² an adaptation of the Roman Canon to the use of some North Italian Church, where the Roman and Milanese uses were combined? Or are they an older form of the Roman Canon itself? As we have seen, the earliest text of that Canon is found in the Vatican MS. of the Gelasian Sacramentary, and that text is really "Gregorian." The earlier Leonine Sacramentary fails us here. We know of certain changes in the Canon made in the period between the date of *de Sacram.* and the date of the text found in the Gelasian Sacramentary.³ Dom R. H. Connolly has recently pointed out in the *Downside Review* (Oct. 1917, pp. 58 f.) that a *Post secreta* prayer in the *Missale Gothicum* contains a continuous extract from the Anamnesis of the Canon in a form which follows that of *de Sacram.* almost

¹ *Liturgy of St. Mark* (Brightman, *LEW.* 129. 20 f.; Coptic *ibid.* 171. 2 f.).

² *Christian Worship* (Eng. tr.), p. 177.

³ The additions: *sanctum sacrificium, immaculatam hostiam* (attributed to Pope Leo); *diesque nostros . . . jubeas grege numerari* (attributed to Pope Gregory). See *Liber Pontificalis* (ed. Duchesne), pp. 239, 312.

word for word (*Missale Goth.*, ed. Bannister (H.B.S.), p. 138, No. 527). This suggests that the compiler of the prayer knew the Canon in a form different from that of the Gelasian Sacramentary, while the constant use made of Roman prayers in the *Missale Gothicum* lends support to the view that it is here quoting from some Roman source. Other traces of readings which occur in *de Sacram.* are found in the Stowe Missal and the *Missale Francorum*, both of which contain the Roman Canon. In both these books we find the addition *et petimus* after the words *supplices te rogamus*, and the words *in sublimi altario tuo* (for *in sublime altare tuum* of Gel.). Both readings occur in *de Sacram.* (with *altari* for *altario*). Another parallel with the text of the prayers in *de Sacram.* adduced by Dom Connolly is found in a rubric of the Gelasian Sacramentary after the *Hanc igitur* for Thursday in Holy Week (Wilson, p. 67), where in place of the Gregorian text, *in sanctas ac venerabiles manus suas*, we find *in sanctis manibus suis*, as in *de Sacram.*

Lastly, M. Batiffol (*Eucharistie*, 5^{ième} éd., pp. 357 f.) has called attention to a *Post pridie* prayer in the Mozarabic *Liber Ordinum* (ed. Férotin, pp. 321–322) where, amid many echoes of the Roman Canon, we find a version of the *Quam oblationem* which in one important respect resembles the corresponding prayer in *de Sacram.* While the latter runs :

Make for us this oblation approved, ratified, reasonable, and acceptable, seeing that it is *the figure of the body and blood* of our Lord Jesus Christ,

the Mozarabic prayer is as follows :

Whose oblation (*quorum oblationem*) do thou deign to bless, ratify, and make reasonable, which is (*quæ est*) *the image and likeness (imago et similitudo) of the body and blood* of Jesus Christ thy Son, our redeemer.

In face of this evidence, and the attitude of the writer

to the usages of the Roman Church (iii. 1. 5), the view that the Canon of *de Sacram.* is the Roman Canon of the fifth century has much to commend it.

Other interesting features of the liturgy described in *de Sacram.* are the reference in iv. 4. 14 to the "praises" and "prayers" which preceded the Canon; the form in which the concluding words of the recital of the institution (based on 1 Cor. xi. 25, 26) are given (iv. 6. 26); and the presence of the doxology at the close of the Lord's Prayer, and not at the close of the Canon as in the Ambrosian Sacramentary of Biasca and the Gelasian Sacramentary (*de Sacram.* vi. 5. 24). On these see the notes on the passages in question. Lastly, the author refers to the words of administration, "The body of Christ," and to the *Amen* with which the communicant responded to them (iv. 5. 25).

VII. EUCHARISTIC DOCTRINE

The two treatises *de Mysteriis* and *de Sacramentis* have played an important part in the Eucharistic controversies of the Western Church. This is due to their pronounced teaching on the conversion of the elements into the body and blood of Christ, and the emphasis which they lay upon the words of institution as effecting this "consecration" or "change." In both respects they mark an epoch in the history of the Western doctrine on the subject, and they have profoundly influenced later teaching. There is nothing parallel to their language in any Western writer before their time. The conception of a "conversion" of the elements into the body and blood of Christ was probably derived by Ambrose, as was so much else in his theology, from Greek sources. It appears for the first time (apart from some anticipations of it in Gnostic writers) in the *Catecheses* of Cyril of Jerusalem, and was elaborated with a special theory

of his own by Gregory of Nyssa (*Or. Cat.* c. 37), with whose language Ambrose exhibits occasional parallels.¹ Hitherto in the West, side by side with the tendency in popular teaching to identify the elements with the body and blood of Christ, we find, as in Tertullian, the bread spoken of as the "figure" (*figura*) of the body of Christ, or as "representing" (*repraesentare*)² His body, though such language has a more definite sense than the corresponding English words, and suggests the idea of exhibiting or making present the sacred realities of which they speak, as when Cyprian speaks of the blood of Christ as "shewn forth" in the cup.³ Similar language is found in Jerome and Ambrosiaster. This stage of reflection is exhibited in the prayers of *de Sacram.* (iv. 5. 21), which speak of the oblation as "the figure (*figura*) of the body and blood of Christ," and refer to it in mystical language as "this holy bread and cup of eternal life." Nor was such language peculiar to the West. It finds a parallel in many Eastern sources during the fourth century, and it survives in the Liturgy of St. Basil,⁴ which (in the words introducing the Invocation) speaks of "offering the types (*ἀντίτυπα*) of the holy body and blood of Thy Christ." Augustine is in the same line of tradition as Tertullian and Cyprian, though he advances upon their teaching and develops a theory of sacraments characterized by the distinction between the visible sign and the invisible reality.

But in Cyril of Jerusalem in the East (A.D. 347) and in Ambrose in the West, a new terminology appears,

¹ With the phrases in Ambrose, *naturam convertere, naturas mutare*, cp. Greg. Nyss. *Or. Cat.* 37, μεταστοιχείωσας τῶν φαινομένων τὴν φύσιν, and with the use of *species* in *de Myst.* 52 (ut *species* mutet elementorum) compare the use of *εἶδος* in Gregory, *l.c.*

² *adv. Marc.* iii. 19, i. 14.

³ *Ep.* lxiii. 2, cp. *ibid.* 11, 13.

⁴ See Brightman, *Lit. E. & W.* 329. 23 f.

and the consecration of the Eucharist is represented as effecting a mysterious change in the elements by which they become the body and blood of Christ. Cyril of Jerusalem had already appealed to the miracle of Cana as affording a parallel to this change.¹ By Ambrose such teaching is much developed. With him the consecration, effected by the words of Christ recited by the priest, is a miraculous act of God, to which parallels may be found in the miracles of Moses, Joshua, Elisha, and in the Virgin Birth, as well as in the act of creation itself. The word of Christ "which was able to make out of nothing that which was not," is capable of "changing things which exist into that which they were not" (*de Myst.* ix. 51, 52). The author of *de Sacramentis* (iv. 4. 15-18) uses similar language. Like Ambrose, he appeals to the original act of creation, to the Virgin birth, to the crossing of the Red Sea, the waters of Marah, and the incident of Elisha making the axe-head to swim.

Ambrose does not hesitate to speak of the change effected as a "change of nature."² But a closer examination of his language shows that he has not clearly thought out all the implications of such teaching. Occasionally he falls back into the language still current in the West, as when he says that the flesh of Christ, which was crucified and buried, was certainly real flesh, and that therefore the Eucharist "is truly a sacrament of that flesh" (ix. 53), nor does he clearly face the question, to which the Schoolmen of later days paid so much attention, what becomes of the bread. On the other hand, he conceives of the body of Christ as

¹ *Cat.* xxii. 2.

² Notice the phrases *naturam mutare*, *naturam convertere*, *praeter naturam*, which are of constant occurrence in *de Myst.* ix. 51-53. In *de Fide* iv. 10. 124 Ambrose uses the word *transfigurare* to denote this "change."

a "spiritual body," "the body of a divine Spirit, because Christ is Spirit," and therefore capable of becoming "the 'spiritual food' of our souls" (*de Myst.* ix. 58).

The author of *de Sacramentis* shows a similar hesitation, when faced with the implications involved in this teaching of a miraculous change effected in the elements by consecration. Though he does not affirm so clearly as Ambrose the spiritual character of the Eucharistic food, he is alive to the materialistic conclusions which may be drawn from his teaching, and in this connexion speaks of receiving "the likeness of the death" and "drinking the likeness of the precious blood" (iv. 4. 20), or again he refers to the sacrament as being received "in a likeness" (*in similitudinem*), though this likeness bestows the "grace and virtue" of the reality (vi. 1. 3). Here again, as in Ambrose above, we see how naturally the older language current in the West reasserts itself. (See further, *Introd.* p. xviii, above.)

The train of thought opened up by Ambrose and his successor, the author of *de Sacram.*, exercised a profound influence on later Western teaching. It encountered a rival influence in the more spiritualizing teaching of St. Augustine. In the Eucharistic controversies of the ninth century aroused by the "conversion" doctrine of Paschasius Radbert, and again in the controversies of the eleventh century, in which Berengar combated the growing belief in Transubstantiation, the rival schools of opinion appealed to the teaching of Ambrose and of *de Sacramentis*, as well as to that of Augustine, and attempted to harmonize their language in the fuller and more explicit treatment which was given to the subject during the period. Both treatises are appealed to as authorities by Ratramn (cent. ix.) in his opposition to Paschasius, by Berengar and his opponents Lanfranc and Witmund of Aversa (cent. xi.)

and by Alger of Liège (cent. xii.). The teaching of Ambrose is the starting-point of those who maintain the identity of the elements with the body and blood of Christ in virtue of the conversion miraculously effected by consecration—the teaching finally formulated in the doctrine of Transubstantiation at the Council of the Lateran in 1216. Augustine is the authority appealed to by those who distinguished the visible sign from the invisible reality, and who tended to maintain a spiritual presence of power and efficacy—a view which passes in its more extreme forms into a purely figurative or commemorative idea of the sacrament.

A second feature in the Eucharistic teaching of *de Myst.* and *de Sacram.* is the emphasis which they lay upon the words of institution as effecting the consecration of the Sacrament. Speculation as to the “moment of consecration” in the Eucharist received an impulse from the very definite teaching of Cyril of Jerusalem. In his *Catecheses* he attributes the consecration to the operation of the Holy Spirit, Who is invoked in the Eucharistic prayer to “make (ποιεῖν) the bread the body of Christ, and the wine His blood”; and he adds, “for whatsoever the Holy Spirit touches is sanctified and changed.”¹ How unfixed, however, were the conceptions of the “form” of consecration even in the latter part of the fourth century in the East is shown by Chrysostom, who sometimes attributes the consecration to the operation of the Holy Spirit, and elsewhere to the efficacy of the words of institution, recited afresh by the priest at every Eucharist.² In Ambrose, however, and in the author of *de Sacramentis*, we find clear expression given to the view that it is the words of Christ “This is my body,” “this is my blood,”

¹ *Cat.* xxiii. 7.

² *de Sacerd.* iii. 4, *in coen. appellat.* 3; *de Prod. Iud.* i. 6.

recited by the priest, which effect the consecration of the sacrament. The whole course of their argument rests upon the operative power of this word to "change the natures" of the sacramental elements into realities of a higher order. While in the East the teaching found in Cyril of Jerusalem became formulated later on in the doctrine that the Holy Spirit, invoked by the prayer of the priest, is the operative power which effects the sacramental mystery, the teaching found in Ambrose and *de Sacramentis* is the starting-point of the development which led to the later Western view that the "form" of the Sacrament is the recital of the words of Christ.

The authors of *de Mysteriis* and *de Sacramentis*, though they deal so fully with the nature of the Eucharistic gift, do not dwell at all upon the conception of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, though Ambrose in other works develops this aspect at some length. But in the prayers quoted in *de Sacram.*, we have an interesting indication of the kind of language in which this idea found expression in the liturgical forms of the period. It is marked by a primitive simplicity. The oblation is spoken of as "a reasonable offering," "an unbloody offering"—phrases common in early Christian writings—and it is compared to the gifts of Abel and the sacrifices of Abraham and Melchizedek. The sacrifice, in fact, is conceived of as commemorative and eucharistic, rather than as propitiatory. The Eucharist is the "thank-offering" of priest and people alike. The language of the Roman Canon, when studied by itself, and apart from later glosses and interpretations, exhibits much the same conception, and the long continuance at Rome, and in the West, of the practice of the people making their offerings of bread and wine served to perpetuate this conception, which is reflected in so

many of the *Secreta* prayers in the later Roman service books.

VIII. THE BIBLICAL TEXT

The quotations from the New Testament found in *de Mysteriis* appear to agree fairly closely on the whole with the text exhibited in the Latin Version of Jerome (the Vulgate), especially in St. Paul's Epistles. There is, however, a considerable number of Old Latin readings, and especially of readings found in the Irish group of Vulgate MSS. Of the other readings found in *de Mysteriis* some appear in other writings of Ambrose and in the works of other Latin Fathers; while others again seem to be due to citations from memory, or free quotations which paraphrase the passages referred to.

The New Testament text exhibited in *de Sacramentis* presents much the same features as that of *de Mysteriis*, and agrees on the whole with the Vulgate, with an intermixture of Old Latin readings, and a certain number of free quotations due to lapse of memory or loose citation.

Among the Old Latin readings found in these treatises are the following:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <i>de Myst.</i> iii. 13 | = John i. 17 (<i>gratia autem</i>). |
| <i>de Myst.</i> iv. 24 | = John i. 33 ("descending from heaven"). |
| <i>de Myst.</i> iii. 8 | = John x. 38 (<i>si mihi non creditis vel operibus credite</i>). |
| <i>de Myst.</i> vi. 31 | } = John xiii. 8 ("if I wash not thy feet"). |
| <i>de Sacram.</i> iii. i. 4 | |
| <i>de Sacram.</i> iii. i. 6. | = John xiii. 9 (<i>non solum . . . sed etiam</i>). |
| <i>de Sacram.</i> iii. i. 7. | = John xiii. 10 (<i>qui lavit non necesse habet</i>). |

<i>de Myst.</i> vi. 33	= John xiii. 14 ("how much more ought ye to wash").
<i>de Myst.</i> viii. 44	} = 1 Cor. ii. 9 (<i>diligentibus</i>).
<i>de Sacram.</i> iv. 2. 25	
<i>de Sacram.</i> vi. 2. 9	= 1 Cor. xii. 4 (<i>ministeriorum</i>).
<i>de Myst.</i> iv. 25	= Phil. ii. 7 (<i>specie inventus ut homo</i> ; frequent in Ambrose, but also occurring in the Old Latin <i>speculum</i> (m.)).

In the version of the Lord's Prayer found in *de Sacram.* v. 4. 18 we find the clause, "*Suffer us not to be led into temptation*" (ne nos *patiaris induci* in tentationem). This is probably due to Tertullian (*de Or.* 8), from whom it passed to Cyprian, the African Old Latin, and some MSS. of the Vulgate. The same author (v. 4. 29) shows acquaintance with another reading in the same clause ("*temptation which we are not able to bear*"), which is quoted by Jerome, Hilary, and Ps. Augustine, *Serm.* lxxiv.

The citation of the insertion in John v. 4 in *de Myst.* iv. 22 and *de Sacram.* ii. 2. 3 exhibits several readings which find support in one or other group of Vulgate MSS. Both have "*qui prior descendisset, languore, and tenebatur*". The word *natatorium* in *de Myst.* corresponds to *natatoria* of some Vulgate MSS. Similarly the readings in John xiii. 8 ("thou *wilt* have no part with me"), and John xiii. 10 ("needeth not *save* to wash *his feet*") are found in some Vulgate MSS.

A certain number of readings in both treatises find support in the works of Ambrose, e.g. 1 Cor. x. 4 (omission of "spiritual" before "rock"), *de Myst.* viii. 49 (so some MSS. in *de Sacram.* v. 1. 3); 1 Cor. x. 11 (*facta sunt* for *contingebant*), *de Sacram.* i. 6. 20; Eph. v. 18 ("*holy* Spirit"), *de Sacram.* v. 3. 17; 1 John v. 7 (the order "water, blood, spirit"), *de Myst.* iv. 20;

Col. iv. 3 (*aperiatur mihi ostium verbi*), *de Sacram.* v. 3. 17. The reading in Mt. x. 16 (quoted *de Myst.* iv. 25), "*astuti sicut serpentes*," is found in Augustine (*de Doctr. Chr.* ii. 16. 24).

In the Old Testament both writers depend upon the Latin Versions made from the Septuagint. Jerome's work on the Old Testament occupied roughly the years 390-405 A.D. The greater part of it was based on the Hebrew, and when published it gained acceptance slowly. This explains the fact that the Old Testament quotations in these treatises shew constant agreement with the Greek Bible where they diverge from the Vulgate. On the other hand, the quotations from the Psalms are in constant agreement with the Vulgate. The reason for this is that the Vulgate Psalter represents Jerome's second revision of the Psalter,¹ which was based on the Greek Versions, and which his later version from the Hebrew failed to supplant in general favour. Where the readings in passages taken from the Psalms diverge from the Vulgate they are generally found to be nearer to those of the Septuagint, *e.g.* in the quotation of Psalm xxiii. (*de Myst.* viii. 43, *de Sacram.* v. 3. 13) both writers read in verse 1 *pascit* for *regit*. In verse 5 of the same psalm *de Myst.* has "*thy*" cup (though some MSS. read "*my*," as in *de Sacram.* and Vulgate). Similarly in *de Sacram.* v. 3. 16 the reading "*ex Aegypto*" (Psalm lxxx. 8 (lxxix. 9)) is nearer to the Septuagint than the Vulgate.

The text of the Song of Songs, for the Old Latin Version of which we have little evidence beyond the copious references in the writings of Ambrose, and a few verses from Jerome, Augustine, and others, presents the same general features as the other Old Testament citations. Its divergences from the readings of the

¹ From its early currency in Gaul this revision is generally known as the Gallican Psalter.

Vulgate are generally explained by reference to the Greek Bible, though in some cases the renderings are due to the use of a different Latin word to represent the same underlying text. The quotation of Cant. viii. 2 in *de Myst.* vii. 40 appears to be a conflation of two readings, combining elements which are found separately in the Septuagint and the Vulgate. If the quotation stood alone it might be thought that the words, "there thou shalt teach me" (*ibi docebis me*), had been introduced into the text from the Vulgate, but the words are found also in Ambrose, *Exp. in Ps. cxviii.* 19. 25, which shows that the reading was current in the time of Ambrose, who died before the completion of Jerome's revision of the Song of Songs.

IX. EDITIONS

The earliest printed texts of the works of Ambrose appeared between the years 1474 and 1506. Among these the edition of Amerbach (Basle, 1492) claims chief notice. These earlier texts were superseded by the edition of Erasmus, published at Basle in four volumes at Froben's press in 1527. This was followed in turn by the editions of Costerius (published by Episcopus at Basle), and that of Gillot (Paris, 1568). By the desire of Popes Pius IV and Pius V a fresh edition was undertaken, and was begun by the monk Felix de Montalto (surnamed Peretti), who afterwards became Pope Sixtus V. This was the famous Roman edition, which was published in five volumes between the years 1580-1585, and superseded all previous editions. In the latter part of the seventeenth century the Benedictines of St. Maur, to whom students owe so much for their labours on the MSS. and texts of the Fathers, produced a fresh edition, based on a considerable number of MSS., in two folio volumes, published at Paris (J. du Frische and N. le Nourry),

1686-1690. This was reprinted at Venice in 1748-1751, and again in 1781-1782. A further reprint appeared in Migne's *Patrologia Latina* (vols. xiv.-xvii.), published at Paris in 1845, and again in 1866 and 1880-1882. Both *de Mysteriis* and *de Sacramentis* are included in vol. xvi. of this work. Another edition, founded on that of the Benedictines, but not displaying the same care or critical acumen, appeared at Milan in six volumes in 1875-1883, under the editorship of P. A. Ballerini. An edition of the works of Ambrose is in course of publication in the Vienna *Corpus scriptorum eccl. latinorum*, but the volumes published do not include the two treatises translated in the present volume.

An English translation of selected works and letters of Ambrose was published by H. de Romestin in vol. x of the *Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (Parker, Oxford and New York, 1896). It includes *de Mysteriis*, but not *de Sacramentis*.

CONCERNING THE MYSTERIES

CHAPTER I

After referring to his instructions given in Lent, Ambrose proposes to give an exposition of the sacraments and explains why this was deferred till now. He expounds the meaning of the "opening of the ears."

1. ON questions of right conduct we discoursed daily at the time when the lives of the patriarchs or the precepts of the Proverbs were being read,¹ in order that, trained and instructed thereby, you might become accustomed to walk in the paths of our elders and to tread in their steps, and to obey the divine oracles; to the end that you might, after being renewed by baptism, continue to practise the life which befitted the regenerate.

2. Now the season reminds us to speak about the mysteries, and to give a reasoned account of the sacraments; for if we had thought that such an account should be propounded before baptism to the uninitiated, we should be esteemed traitors rather than teachers; further, because it were better that the light of the mysteries should reveal itself unasked and unexpected than preceded by some discourse.²

¹ Ambrose is referring to the lessons from Genesis and Proverbs which at Milan were read in Lent at the *missae catechumenorum* attended by the *competentes* or candidates for baptism. We have an example of the kind of instruction given in the sermons of Ambrose, *On Abraham*, which deal with "right conduct" and which were addressed to candidates for baptism. See *Introductio*, p. xvi.

² On this practice of withholding instruction on the Sacraments till after the Easter Communion, see *Introductio*, p. xiii.

3. Open, therefore, your ears, and draw in the *sweet savour*¹ of eternal life breathed on you by the office of the sacraments : which we indicated to you when in performing the mystery of the "opening"² we said, *Ephpheta, which is, Be opened*, that each one who is coming to grace might know what he is asked, should be bound to remember what he answered.

4. This mystery Christ performed in the Gospel, as we read, when he cured a deaf and dumb man.³ But he touched his mouth, because he was curing one who was dumb and also a man : on the one hand, that he might open his mouth by the sound of the voice bestowed on him, on the other hand, because to touch the mouth was proper in the case of a man, but was not proper in the case of a woman,

CHAPTER II

Ambrose recalls the baptismal promises and the witnesses in whose presence they were made.

5. AFTER this the *Holy of holies*⁴ was unbarred to thee, thou didst enter the shrine of regeneration ; remember what thou wast asked, recollect what thou didst answer. Thou didst renounce the devil and his works, the world and its luxury and pleasures.⁵ Thy answer is kept, not in the tomb of the dead, but in the book of the living.

6. Thou sawest there a levite, thou sawest a priest,

¹ 2 Cor. ii. 16.

² The ceremony of the *Effeta*, to which at Milan the name "opening of the ears" was given, was performed on Easter Eve. See Introd. p. xxi.

³ Mark vii. 34, from which the ceremony takes its name. It is more fully described in *de Sacram.* i. 1. 2.

⁴ Heb. ix. 3. Here it refers to the baptistery.

⁵ For a fuller description see *de Sacramentis*, i. 1. 5.

thou sawest the high priest.¹ Do not consider the bodily forms, but the grace of the mysteries. Thou didst speak in the presence of the angels, as it is written that *the priest's lips keep knowledge, and they seek the law at his mouth: for he is the angel of the Lord Almighty.*² There is no room here for deceit or denial; he is the "angel" who announces the kingdom of Christ and eternal life. He shall be to thee as one not to be valued for his outward appearance, but for his office. What he has delivered to you, consider; ponder its use, recognize its character.

7. Thou didst enter, therefore, to discern thine adversary, and, by way of renouncing him, to spit in his face;³ thou dost turn to the east. For he who renounces the devil, turns to Christ, looks at him with direct gaze.

CHAPTER III

The operation of the Divine power in baptism is illustrated by Old Testament types.

8. WHAT sawest thou? Water, to be sure, but not water only; levites ministering there, the high priest

¹ The words are: *levita, sacerdos, summus sacerdos*. See note on *de Sacram.* i. 1. 2. Here *sacerdos* ('priest') is used in the same sense as *presbyter* in *de Sacram.*, though elsewhere in this book, as in *de Sacramentis*, it denotes the bishop, who is here referred to as *summus sacerdos*, "high priest," by way of distinguishing him from the presbyter.

² Malachi ii. 7. On the Biblical text of Ambrose see *Introd.* pp. xlf.

³ The text translated is an emendation proposed by Dom G. Morin (*Revue bénédictine*, xvi. (1899), pp. 414 f.). For the reading of the MSS. "cui renuntiandum in os putares" [v.ll. "putaris," "sputaris"] he suggests "cui renuntiando in os sputares." The spitting finds a parallel in the Greek and Armenian rites. These parallels, however, belong to a later period, and there is no mention of the practice elsewhere in the writings of Ambrose.

questioning¹ and consecrating. First of all, the Apostle has taught thee that we must *not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*² For elsewhere too thou readest that *the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are comprehended by the things which are made; his eternal power and divinity also are understood from his works.*³ Whence also the Lord himself says, *If ye believe not me, believe at least the works.*⁴ Believe, therefore, that the presence of the Divinity is there. Thou believest the working, dost not thou believe the presence? Whence would ensue the working, did not the presence precede?

9. But consider how old the mystery is, prefigured in the beginning of the world itself. *In the very beginning, when God made heaven and earth, the Spirit, it says, moved upon the waters.*⁵ He who *moved upon the waters*, did he not work *upon the waters*? But why do I say "work"? As regards presence,⁶ he *moved*. Did not he who *moved* work? Admit that he was working in the creation of the world, when the prophet says to thee,⁷ *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the Spirit of his mouth.* Each rests upon prophetic testimony, both that he moved, and that he worked. That he moved, Moses says: that he worked, David testifies.

10. Take another testimony. All flesh was corrupt from its sins. *My Spirit*, said God, *shall not abide in*

¹ In *de Sacram.* i. 2. 5 the questions are apparently put by the presbyter, here by the bishop.

² 2 Cor. iv. 18.

³ Rom. i. 20.

⁴ Jn. x. 38.

⁵ Gen. i. 2.

⁶ "quod ad praesentiam spectat." The meaning is: "All that was certainly visible was the moving."

⁷ Ps. xxxiii. 6 (Vulg. xxxii. 6).

*men, for they are flesh.*¹ Whereby God shows that by carnal uncleanness and the stain of more serious sin spiritual grace is alienated. Whence God, wishing to repair what was wanting, made a flood, and bade righteous Noah go up into the ark.² He, as the flood abated, sent forth first a raven, which did not return; then he sent forth a dove which, we read, returned with an olive branch.³ Thou seest the water, thou seest the wood, thou beholdest the dove, and dost thou doubt the mystery?

11. So the water is that in which the flesh is plunged, to wash away every sin of the flesh; every wrong act is buried there. The wood is that whereon the Lord Jesus was nailed when he suffered for us. The dove is that in whose *shape the Holy Ghost descended*, as thou hast learned in the New Testament,⁴ who breathes into thee peace of soul, calm of mind. The raven is a figure of sin, which goes forth and does not return, if thou art careful to guard and conform to righteousness.

12. There is also a third testimony, as the Apostle teaches thee, *that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized in Moses in the cloud and in the sea.*⁵ Thus, Moses himself also says in his Song, *Thou didst send thy Spirit, and the sea covered them.*⁶ Thou observest that even then was holy baptism prefigured in that passing through of the Hebrews, in which the Egyptian perished and the Hebrew escaped. For what else are we taught in this sacrament daily, but that guilt is drowned and error destroyed, while goodness and innocence remained safe to the end?

13. Thou hearest *that our fathers were under the cloud*;

¹ Gen. vi. 3.

² Gen. viii. 7 f.

³ 1 Cor. x. 1, 2 (Vulgate).

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⁴ Gen. vii. 1 *sq.*

⁵ Lk. iii. 22.

⁶ Ex. xv. 10 (following LXX).

and a good cloud which cooled the fires of carnal passions. The good cloud overshadows those whom the Holy Spirit visits ; so he *came upon* the virgin Mary and the power of the *Highest overshadowed* her,¹ when she bare redemption for the human race. And that miracle was wrought by Moses in a figure.² If, then, the Spirit was present in the figure, is he not present in the reality, since the Scripture says to thee, *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ?*³

14. The font of Marah was most bitter ; Moses *cast wood* into it, and it was *made sweet*.⁴ For water without the proclamation of the Lord's cross serves no purpose of future salvation ; but when it has been consecrated by the mystery of the saving cross,⁵ then it is fitted for the use of the spiritual laver and the cup of salvation. As, therefore, Moses, that is, the prophet, *cast wood* into that font, so also the priest casts the proclamation of the Lord's cross into this font, and the water becomes sweet unto grace.

15. Do not, therefore, trust only the eyes of thy body ; that which is not seen is more truly seen. For the one is temporal ; in the other the eternal is seen, which is not apprehended by the eyes but is discerned by the intellect and mind.

16. Thus again, let the lesson from the Kings⁶ that has been read teach thee. Naaman was a Syrian, and a leper, nor could he be cleansed by any one. Then said a maid, who was of the captives, that there was a prophet in Israel who could cleanse him from the taint of leprosy. Taking gold and silver, it says, he went his way to the king of Israel. He, learning the cause of his arrival,

¹ Lk. i. 35.

² Ex. xiv. 21 *sq.*

³ Jn. i. 17.

⁴ Ex. xv. 23 *sq.*

⁵ An allusion to the signing of the water with the Cross at the consecration of the font. Cp. iv. 20.

⁶ 2 Kings v. 1 *sq.*

rent his clothes, saying that it was really a plot against him, since demands were made of him which were beyond royal power. But Elisha bade the king send the Syrian to him, that he might know that there was a *God in Israel*.¹ And when he came, he commanded him to dip seven times in the river Jordan.

17. Then he began to think within himself that he had the better waters of his own country, in which he had often dipped without being cleansed from leprosy, and drawn away by this thought, he was minded to disobey the prophet's commands; but he yielded to the advice and solicitations of his servants, and dipped; and he was straightway cleansed, and understood that it was due not to water, but to grace, that each one was cleansed.

18. Learn now who that young captive maiden is. Of a truth she is the congregation from the Gentiles, that is, the Church of the Lord once sunk in the captivity of sin, when she did not as yet possess the liberty of grace; by whose counsel the vain people of the nations heard the prophetic word. And this at first and for long they doubted; afterwards, however, they believed that it should be obeyed, and were washed from all taint of faults. Now they doubted² before they were healed; thou art already healed, and therefore oughtest not to doubt.

¹ 2 Kings v. 8. Ambrose, by a slip of memory, substitutes "a God in Israel" for "a prophet in Israel."

² *ille quidem dubitavit*. This probably refers to *populus* rather than Naaman.

CHAPTER IV

The presence of the Spirit is necessary to the efficacy of baptism. Illustrations from the healing of the paralytic in John v. and from the operation of the Spirit in the baptism of Christ.

19. FOR this cause wast thou forewarned not to believe merely what thou sawest, lest perchance thou too shouldest say, "Is this that great mystery *which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man?*"¹ I see water which I used to see daily; can that cleanse me into which I have often descended without ever being cleansed?" Hence know that water does not cleanse without the Spirit.

20. And for this very reason thou hast read that the *three* witnesses in baptism *are one, the water, the blood, and the Spirit,*² because, if thou takest away one of these the sacrament of baptism no longer remains. For what is water without the Cross of Christ? A common element without any sacramental effect. Nor again is there any mystery of regeneration without water, for *except a man be born anew of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*³ But even a catechumen believes in the Cross of the Lord Jesus, wherewith he also is signed;⁴ but unless he is baptized *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,*⁵ he cannot receive the remission of sins nor imbibe the gift of spiritual grace.

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 9 (Vulgate).

² 1 Jn. v. 7. The same order, "water," "blood," "Spirit," is found in the reference to this passage in Ambrose, *Expos. in Lucam* x. 48, where the passage is similarly applied.

³ Jn. iii. 5. A free quotation.

⁴ This signing of the catechumen with the Cross is here distinguished from the rite of baptism. It probably took place at the beginning of the catechumenate. It is not mentioned in *de Sacramentis*, but is found in the Gelasian Sacramentary in the *Ordo ad catechumenum ex pagano faciendum* (Wilson, p. 113).

⁵ Mt. xxviii. 19.

21. So the Syrian dipped seven times¹ under the Law. But thou wast baptized in the name of the Trinity, thou didst confess the Father—remember what thou didst—thou didst confess the Son, thou didst confess the Holy Spirit. Do not forget the order of things in this faith. Thou didst die to the world, and didst rise to God. And as if *buried together* in this element of the world, thou art *dead to sin*,² and raised to eternal life. Believe, therefore, that the water is not without power.

22. Therefore it was told thee how that *an angel of the Lord went down at a certain season into the pool, and the water was troubled: and whosoever first after the troubling of the water descended into the pool was made whole of whatsoever disease he had*.³ This pool was in Jerusalem, and in it one person a year was cured; but no one was healed before the angel had descended. For a sign that the angel had descended, the water was troubled because of the unbelieving. For them the sign, for thee faith; for them an angel descended, for thee the Holy Spirit; for them the created element was troubled, for thee Christ acts, the very Lord of creation.

23. Then one was healed, now all are made whole; or, to be exact, one only—the Christian people; for in the case of some even the *water is deceitful*.⁴ The baptism of the unbelievers does not heal, does not

¹ 2 Kings v. 14.

² Col. ii. 12, 13; Rom. vi. 4.

³ Jn. v. 4. The passage is an early interpolation, and was known to Tertullian (*de Bapt.* 5).

⁴ A ref. to Jer. xv. 18 (R.V. “wilt thou be unto me as a deceitful brook, as waters that fail?”). The Vulgate reads, *facta est mihi quasi mendacium aquarum infidelium*. Ambrose, combining this with the statement about the “baptism” of cups and pots in Mk. vii. 4, sees in it a condemnation of unbelievers’ baptism. He is thinking of the baptisms practised by heathen and Jews. See *de Sacram.* ii. 1. 2.

cleanse, but defiles. The Jew *baptizes pots and cups*, as if inanimate things were capable of sin or grace. Baptize thou this animate cup of thine, in which thy good works may shine, in which the splendour of thy grace may glow. Therefore also that pool was as a figure, that thou mayest believe that the divine power descends into this font.

24. Thus again, the sick of the palsy was waiting for a *man*.¹ Who was that but the Lord Jesus, born of the Virgin? At whose coming no longer would the shadow heal men one at a time, but the truth would heal all. He, therefore, it is who was expected to descend, of whom God the Father said to John the Baptist, *upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending from heaven, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost*.² Of whom John bare witness, saying, *I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove and remaining on him*.³ And why did the Spirit descend here *like a dove*, but that thou mightest see, but that thou mightest recognize that that dove too which righteous Noah sent out of the ark was a likeness of this dove, that thou mightest recognize a type of the sacrament.

25. And perhaps thou mayest say, "Since that was a real dove which was sent forth, here only *as it were a dove descended*, how do we say that the likeness was there, the reality here?"⁴ For according to the Greeks

¹ Jn. v. 7.

² Jn. i. 33.

³ Jn. i. 32.

⁴ This section is very confused. The thought seems to be as follows. Since in Lk. iii. 22 the Spirit descends in "*bodily form*" (Gk. εἶδος, the regular equivalent of *species*), it may seem perverse to ascribe *species* to the dove of Gen. viii. rather than to the divine dove. Still, in the ordinary sense, the word *species*, which implies mutability, is properly used of the created and not of the divine, though there is another sense in which it may be predicated even of the divine. The argument is further confused by the interpolation of the suggestion that the reason why the Spirit took the form of a dove was to be a type of the simplicity of the true Christian. The

it is written that the Spirit descended *in the likeness* of a dove. But what is so real as the divinity which *abideth for ever*?¹ The created thing, however, cannot be the reality, but only a likeness, which is readily dissolved and changed. At the same time because in those who are baptized there should be innocence, not in appearance, but in reality (whence the Lord also says, *Be ye wise as serpents, and innocent as doves*),² rightly, therefore, did he descend *like a dove*, to remind us that we ought to have the innocence of a dove. But that the word "likeness" is to be taken also as meaning reality is shown by what we read both of Christ, *And he was found in likeness as a man*,³ and of God the Father. *Nor have you seen his likeness*.⁴

CHAPTER V

Further testimonies to the Divine working in baptism. The baptismal profession of faith.

26. Is there still any reason why thou shouldst doubt, when the Father clearly calls to thee in the Gospel and says, *This is my Son, in whom I am well pleased*;⁵ when the Son calls, on whom the Holy Spirit showed himself *as a dove*: when the Holy Spirit also calls, who descended *as a dove*: when David calls, *The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of majesty has thundered: the Lord is upon many waters*:⁶ when the Scripture witnesses to thee that at the prayers of Jerubbaal fire

sense is more clearly indicated if, as has been done in the translation, we remove the full stops after *simplicitas* and *columbae*.

¹ Jn. viii. 35.

² Mt. x. 16.

³ Phil. ii. 7.

⁴ Jn. v. 37 (Vulgate).

⁵ Mt. iii. 17 (freely quoted).

⁶ Ps. xxix. (Vulg. xxviii.) 3.

descended from heaven,¹ and again, on Elijah praying, fire was sent which consecrated the sacrifice?²

27. Do not consider the merits of persons, but the office of priests. And if thou lookest at merits, consider the priest as Elijah; look at the merits of Peter, too, or of Paul,³ who received this mystery from the Lord Jesus, and handed it on to us. Visible fire was sent to them, that they might believe; for us, who believe, one who is invisible acts: to them for a figure, to us for admonition. Believe, therefore, that invoked by the prayers of the priests the Lord Jesus is present who says, *Where there are two or three, there am I also*; ⁴ how much more where the Church is, where his mysteries are, does he deign to bestow his presence!

28. Thou didst descend, then; remember what thou didst answer, that thou believest in the Father, thou believest in the Son, thou believest in the Holy Spirit.⁵ It is not a case of, I believe in a greater and a less and a least;⁶ but thou art bound by the same pledge of thine own voice to believe in the Son exactly as thou believest in the Father, to believe in the Holy Spirit exactly as thou believest in the Son; with this one exception, that thou confessest the necessity of belief in the Cross⁷ of the Lord Jesus alone.

¹ A reference to Gideon (Judges vi. 21). The name Jerubbaal is found in Judges vi. 32.

² 1 Kings xviii. 38.

³ The meaning is: if we allow the thought of merit to enter into our thought of the priest, it must be the merit of those whom he succeeds and represents, Elijah, Peter, Paul.

⁴ Mt. xviii. 20 (freely quoted).

⁵ The interrogatory Creed at Milan is quoted more fully in *de Sacram.* ii. 7. 20.

⁶ Ambrose has in view the Arians, who denied the co-equality of the Persons of the Trinity.

⁷ Cp. *de Sacram.* ii. 7. 20, where the formula runs: "Dost thou believe in our Lord Jesus Christ and in His Cross?"

CHAPTER VI

The significance of the unction after baptism and of the washing of the feet of the baptized.

29. AFTER all this thou didst go up to the priest.¹ Consider what followed, was it not that which David said, *It is like the ointment upon the head, that ran down unto the beard, even unto Aaron's beard?*² This is the ointment of which Solomon also says, *Thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore did the maidens love thee and draw thee.*³ How many souls regenerated to-day have loved thee, Lord Jesus, saying, *Draw us after thee, we run to the odour of thy garments,*⁴ that they may drink in the odour of the resurrection?

30. Understand why this is done, because *the wise man's eyes are in his head.*⁵ It flowed down *unto the beard*—that is, unto the grace of youth—even *unto Aaron's beard*, for this purpose, that thou mayest become *a chosen generation, priestly, precious*⁶; for we are all

¹ Ambrose is referring to the unction of the head after baptism. The word *sacerdos* (translated "priest") here refers to the bishop (see note on ii. 6). The prayer accompanying the unction is given in *de Sacram.* ii. 7. 24. See *Introd.* p. xxiv.

² Ps. cxxxiii. (cxxxii. Vulg.) 2.

³ Cant. i. 2. The quotation agrees with the LXX in reading *exinanitum* and *attraxerunt te*. On the mystical interpretation of the Song of Songs, see *Introd.* pp. xiv ff.

⁴ Cant. i. 3. The words "to the odour of thy ointments" are found in the LXX and Vulgate. Ambrose substitutes "garments" for "ointments," possibly because he has in mind Gen. xxvii. 27.

⁵ Eccl. ii. 14. The same passage is referred to in *de Sacram.* iii. 1. 1, where the author has "the senses of a wise man," a reading also found in Ambrose, *Exp. in Psalm cxviii.* 20. 1. The meaning of Ambrose is brought out more clearly if we render: "Understand why this is done. It is because the wise man's eyes are in his head." The head is anointed because it is the seat of intelligence. So it is explained in *de Sacram.*

⁶ 1 Pet. ii. 9. The word "precious" does not occur in the passage, but was possibly suggested by the context (v. 6), or by the words "a people for God's own possession." On this association of the post-baptismal unction with the priesthood of the whole

anointed with spiritual grace unto the kingdom of God and the priesthood.

31. Thou didst go up from the font. Remember the Gospel lesson.¹ For our Lord Jesus in the Gospel washed the feet of his disciples. When *he came to Simon Peter*, Peter said, *Thou shalt never wash my feet*. He did not perceive the mystery, and therefore he refused the ministry; because he thought that it was an offence against the humility of a servant, if he should patiently allow the Lord's service to himself. To whom the Lord answered, *If I do not wash thy feet, thou wilt have no part with Me*.² Hearing this, Peter said, *Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head*. The Lord answered, *He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit*.³

32. Peter was clean, but he needed to wash his feet; for he still had sin by derivation from the first man, when the serpent tripped him and led him into trespass.⁴ His foot is washed that hereditary sins may be removed; for our own sins are remitted by baptism.⁵

body of the Church see T. Thompson, *Offices of Baptism and Confirmation*, p. 222.

¹ Jn. xiii. 4 f. Apparently the Gospel lesson was read at the time of the washing of the feet of the newly-baptized. The earliest reference to the later custom of bishops washing the feet of their subordinates on Maundy Thursday comes from Spain, and is found in the third canon of the Seventeenth Council of Toledo (694 A.D.).

² Jn. xiii. 8 ³ Jn. xiii. 10. ⁴ A ref. to Gen. iii. 1 f.

⁵ Ambrose here connects baptism with the removal of personal or actual sin. But he also suggests that the "washing of the feet" has a similar sacramental efficacy with regard to transmitted (or hereditary) sin. This is one of the passages which led Daillé and others to contest the ascription of the treatise to Ambrose. But the same teaching is found elsewhere in Ambrose's writings, e. g. *Exp. in Psalm xlviii.* 8. 9; and a passage from a lost commentary on Isaiah quoted by Augustine, *c. duas epistolas Pelag.* iv. 11. Cf. also *de Spir. sancto*, i. prol. 16. The author of *de Sacramentis* (iii. 1. 7) silently corrects this teaching, by explaining that while every fault is washed away in baptism, the washing of the feet supplies an increase of sanctifying power at the point where the serpent

33. At the same time recognize that there is a mystical meaning in the actual ministry of humility; for He says, *If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, how much more ought ye also to wash one another's feet?*¹ For since the *Author of salvation*² Himself redeemed us through obedience, how much more ought we, his poor servants, to display the service of humility and obedience?

CHAPTER VII

The meaning of the white garments in which the baptized were clothed is expounded and illustrated by a mystical exposition of the Song of Songs. The "spiritual seal" and its interpretation.

34. THOU receivedst after this white raiment³ for a sign that thou hast put off the covering of sins, thou hast put on the chaste garments of innocence, whereof the Prophet said, *Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.*⁴ For he who is baptized is plainly cleansed both according to the Law and according to the Gospel; according to the Law, because Moses with a *bunch of hyssop*⁵ sprinkled the blood of the lamb: according to the Gospel, because Christ's *raiment* was *white as snow*, when he showed the glory of his resurrection in the Gospel.⁶ He, then, is made *whiter than snow* whose guilt is forgiven. Whence also the Lord saith by Isaiah, *If your sins be as scarlet, I will make them as white as snow.*⁷

35. The Church, having received these garments by

made his treacherous attack. On the ceremony of the washing of the feet, see *Intro.* p. xxiv.

¹ Jn. xiii. 14.

³ See *Intro.* pp. xxiv ff.

⁵ Ex. xii. 22.

⁷ Is. i. 18. The quotation agrees with the LXX, and is found in a corresponding form in Cyprian.

² Heb. ii. 10.

⁴ Ps. li. 7 (Vulg. l. 9).

⁶ Mt. xxviii. 3.

the *laver of regeneration*,¹ says in the Canticles, *I am black and comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem* :²—*black* through the frailty of her human condition, *comely* through grace ; *black*, because consisting of sinners, *comely* by the sacrament of faith. Seeing these garments the *daughters of Jerusalem* say in amazement, *Who is this that cometh up made white* ?³ She was black ; whence is she now suddenly white ?

36. The angels also doubted when Christ rose,⁴ the powers of the heavens doubted seeing that flesh ascended into heaven. So they said, *Who is the King of glory* ? And when some said, *Lift up the gates of your Prince*, and be ye lift up, *ye everlasting gates, and the King of glory shall come in* ; then others doubted saying, *Who is this King of glory* ?⁵ In Isaiah too thou readest that the powers of the heavens doubting said, *Who is this that cometh up from Edom, the crimson of his garments is from Bozrah, beauteous in white apparel* ?⁶

37. But Christ seeing his Church in white garments—the Church for whom he had put on *filthy garments*, as thou readest in the book of the prophet Zechariah⁷—or

¹ Tit. iii. 5.

² Cant. i. 4. The passage is similarly applied in *de Spir. sancto*, ii. 10. 112, which closely resembles the present passage.

³ Cant. viii. 5 (following the LXX).

⁴ This interpretation of Psalm xxiv. (possibly suggested by such passages as Eph. iii. 10, 1 Pet. i. 13) is found also in Ambrose, *de Inst. Virginis*, v. 9. Cp. *de Fide*, iv. 1. 5. In the former of these passages, as here, Ambrose also refers to Is. lxiii. 1.

⁵ Ps. xxiv. (Vulg. xxiii.) 8, 9. The quotation differs from both LXX and Vulgate. The text may be corrupt, and perhaps we should read with the Vulgate *tollite portas, principes, vestras* ("Lift up your gates, ye princes"). The reading *vestras* is found in some MSS. of *de Myst.*

⁶ Is. lxiii. 1. The rendering given follows the LXX in the earlier part of the quotation. Jerome once quotes the concluding words in the form *in stola candida*.

⁷ Zech. iii. 3. The name of Joshua in that passage is represented by "Jesus" in the LXX and Latin versions ; hence the application which Ambrose makes of the narrative.

seeing, it may be, the soul¹ clean and washed by the laver of regeneration, saith, *Behold, thou art fair, my neighbour; behold, thou art fair; thine eyes are as a dove's*²—in whose likeness the Holy Spirit descended from heaven.³ Beautiful eyes as of a dove—because in the likeness thereof the Holy Spirit descended from heaven.

38. And further on, *Thy teeth are like a flock of the shorn, which have come up from the laver; which all bear twins, and none is barren among them. Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet.*⁴ No slight praise is this. First, in the pleasant comparison with *the shorn*. For we know that goats both feed on high places without danger and get food on steep ascents securely⁵; then when they are shorn, they are relieved of what is superfluous. With a flock of these the Church is compared, having in herself the many virtues of the souls who through the laver lay down superfluous sins, who offer to Christ mystic faith and the grace of right conduct, who tell of the cross of the Lord Jesus.

39. In these the Church is beautiful. Whence God the Word says to her, *Thou art all fair, my love; there is no fault in thee*—because guilt is sunk in the waters. *Come hither from Lebanon, my spouse, come hither from Lebanon; thou shalt pass, and pass over from the beginning of faith*⁶—because, in renouncing the world, she

¹ Similarly in *de Sacram.* v. 2. 7 f. it is suggested that the imagery of Canticles may be applied either to the Church as a whole or to the individual soul. This twofold application goes back to Origen's *Commentary on Canticles*, part of which is extant in the Latin translation of Rufinus.

² Cant. iv. 1. The reading *proxima* ('neighbour') follows the LXX. The passage is similarly applied in *de Inst. Virg.* i. 4.

³ Lk. iii. 22.

⁴ Cant. iv. 2, 3.

⁵ The reference to "goats feeding securely on steep ascents" is suggested by the context of the preceding quotation. In Cant. iv. 1 Mount Gilead is referred to as the abode of the goats.

⁶ Cant. iv. 7, 8 (following the LXX). The passage is quoted in the same form in Ambrose, *de Isaac*, v. 47.

has passed this life, she has passed over to Christ. And again God the Word says to her, *How fair and pleasant thou art become, O love, in thy delights! Thy stature has become like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes.*¹

40. To whom the Church replies, *Who will give thee to me, my brother, that didst suck the breasts of my mother? Finding thee without I will kiss thee; and indeed they will not despise me. I will take thee, and bring thee into my mother's house and into the chamber of her who conceived me. Thou shalt teach me.*² Dost thou see how she is delighted with the gift of graces, and desires to enter into the inner mysteries and consecrate all her senses to Christ? Still she seeks, still she stirs up love, and asks that it may be stirred up for her by the daughters of Jerusalem, by the grace of whom, that is, by the grace of faithful souls, she desires that the Bridegroom be roused to fuller love for her.

41. Whence the Lord Jesus himself also attracted by the zeal of such love, by the beauty of comeliness and grace (since there is no longer the foulness of sins in those who are washed), says to the Church, *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a signet upon thine arm,*³ that is, thou art comely, *my neighbour, thou art all fair*, thou lackest nothing. *Set me as a seal upon thine heart*, that thy faith may shine with the fulness of the sacrament. Let thy works also shine and display the image of God,

¹ Cant. vii. 6, 7.

² Cant. viii. 1, 2. The words "into the chamber of her who conceived me" are found in the LXX, but are not in the Hebrew or Vulgate. The passage is quoted with these words in *de Inst. Virg.* i. 5, where the application closely resembles that found here. On the other hand, the words "thou shalt teach me" are absent from the LXX, but are found in the Vulgate, and are quoted by Ambrose, *Exp. in Ps. cxviii.* 19. 25. See *Introd.* p. xliii.

³ Cant. viii. 6. The passage is similarly applied in *de Inst. Virg.* xvii. 113.

in whose image thou wast made. Let no persecution impair thy love, which *much water cannot shut out, floods cannot overflow*.¹

42. Wherefore recollect that thou hast received the spiritual seal,² *the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and godliness, the spirit of holy fear*,³ and preserve what thou hast received. *God the Father hath sealed thee, Christ the Lord hath confirmed thee, and hath given the earnest of the Spirit in thy heart, as thou hast learned from the apostolic lesson*.⁴

CHAPTER VIII

The sacrament of the Eucharist prefigured in Psalm xxiii., in the incident of Melchizedek, and in the manna and water miraculously supplied to Israel in the wilderness.

43. RICH with these adornments the cleansed people hastens to the altar of Christ, saying, *And I will go unto the altar of God, even unto the God that maketh glad my*

¹ Cant. viii. 7. For a closely parallel application see *de Inst. Virg.* xvii. 113.

² For the "spiritual seal," cf. *de Sacram.* iii. 2. 8, where the rite referred to is called "the perfecting" (*perfectio*). It seems to have consisted of a "signing" (whether with or without unction we are not told), and is connected both here and in *de Sacram.* iii. 2. 8-10; vi. 2. 6 with the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit. It is referred to in similar terms in Ambrose, *de Spir. sancto*, i. 6. 72. See further *Introd.* pp. xxv ff.

³ Is. xi. 2. The passage suggests that the "spiritual seal" may have been accompanied with a prayer for the sevenfold gifts, such as we find mentioned in Spanish writers. There is a similar prayer in the Gelasian Sacramentary (Wilson, p. 87), familiar to us from its use in the Confirmation Service of the Book of Common Prayer. The reading *virtutis* ("strength") for Vulg. *fortitudinis* is found in Novatian, *de Trin.* 29.

⁴ 2 Cor. i. 21, 22, where the words *confirmat, signavit* are found in the Latin version. For a similar application see *de Spir. sancto*, i. 6. 72.

youth ;¹ for, putting off the slough of long-standing sin, renewed in the youth of the eagle,² she hastens to approach that heavenly banquet. She comes, therefore, and seeing the holy altar duly ordered, cries and says, *Thou hast prepared a table before me.*³ She it is whom David represents as the speaker, in the words,⁴ *The Lord is my shepherd, and I shall not want. In a place of pasture there he hath placed me; by the water of rest he hath tended me. And below, For though I walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me: Thy rod and thy staff, they have comforted me. Thou hast prepared a table before me against them that trouble me: Thou hast anointed my head with oil; and Thy inebriating cup, how glorious it is!*

44. Now let us consider the following point, lest perchance any one, seeing the visible things (for those that are invisible are not seen, nor can they be apprehended by human eyes) may say perchance, "For the Jews God rained manna,⁵ rained quails; for the beloved Church are these things which he has prepared, of which it has been said, *That which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, and which hath not entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*"⁶

Therefore, that no one may say this, we wish with all

¹ Ps. xliii. (xlii. Vulg.) 4. This psalm is often mentioned by Ambrose in connexion with the Eucharist, though the *Introit* of the Roman and Ambrosian rites belongs to a later date.

² Ps. ciii. (cii. Vulg.) 5.

³ Ps. xxiii. (xxii. Vulg.) 5.

⁴ Ps. xxiii. (xxii. Vulg.) 1-5. The rendering in verse 5 ("thy inebriating cup . . .") follows the LXX. There is a v.l. "*my cup*" in this passage, with which the text of *de Sacram.* v. 3. 13, is in accord.

⁵ Ps. lxxviii. (lxxvii. Vulg.) 24; cf. Ex. xvi. 4 f. For the quails see Ex. xvi. 13.

⁶ 1 Cor. ii. 9. The reading *diligentibus* is Old Latin (Vulg. *qui diligunt*). Cf. *de Sacram.* iv. 2. 25.

earnestness to prove that the sacraments of the Church are both older than those of the synagogue and more excellent than manna is.

45. That they are older is taught by the lesson from Genesis which has been read. For the synagogue derived its origin from the law of Moses. But Abraham is far earlier; who, when he had won the victory, defeating the enemy and recovering his own nephew, was then met by Melchizedek who *brought forth* the gifts which Abraham received with reverence.¹ It was not Abraham that *brought them forth*, but Melchizedek, who is represented as being *without father, without mother, having neither beginning of days nor end, but like unto the Son of God*; of whom Paul says in the Epistle to the Hebrews that he *abideth a priest continually*,² who in the Latin version is called *King of righteousness, King of peace*.³

46. Do you not recognize who this is? Can a man be *King of righteousness*, when he is hardly righteous himself? Can he be *King of peace* when he can hardly be peaceable? It is he who is *without mother*, as touching his Godhead, because he was begotten of his Father who is God, *being of one substance with the Father*; *without father*, as touching his incarnation, for he was born of the Virgin; *not having beginning, and end*, because he is *the beginning and the end*⁴ of all, *the first*

¹ Gen. xiv. 17 f. The sacrifice of Melchizedek is constantly referred to as a type of the Eucharist in Church writers from the time of Cyprian onwards, and finds a place in the prayers of the Canon of the Mass quoted in *de Sacram.* iv. 6. 27. The incident is also dealt with in *de Sacram.* iv. 3. 10, 12. Cf. also Ambrose, *de Fide*, iii. 11. 87 f.

² Heb. vii. 3. The attribution of the Epistle to St. Paul, which first appears in Clement of Alexandria, became common in the East in the fourth century, and thence it spread into the West, though doubts as to the authorship continued to be expressed by Western writers.

³ Heb. vii. 2.

⁴ Rev. xxi. 6.

*and the last.*¹ Therefore the sacrament which thou hast received is not a human but a divine gift, *brought forth*² by him who blessed the father of faith, Abraham, whose grace and actions thou admirest.

47. It has been proved that the sacraments of the Church are older; now learn that they are better. It is indeed a wonderful thing that God should have *rained manna*³ for the fathers, and they were fed on daily food from heaven. Whence it was said, *Man did eat angels' bread.*⁴ But yet all who *did eat* that bread *died in the wilderness*;⁵ this meat however, which thou receivest, is *the living bread which came down from heaven*,⁶ and furnisheth the substance of eternal life; and whosoever *eateth this, shall never die*:⁷ and it is the body of Christ.

48. Consider now whether the *bread of angels* or the flesh of Christ (which is indeed the body of life) is the more excellent. That manna was *from heaven*, this is above heaven; that was *of heaven*, this is of the Lord of the heavens; that was liable to corruption, if it was kept for a second day;⁸ this is far removed from all corruption, which whosoever shall taste devoutly, cannot feel corruption. For them water flowed from the rock,⁹ for thee blood from Christ;¹⁰ the water satisfied them for a season, the blood cleanses thee for ever. The Jews drank, and thirsted; thou when thou hast drunk, canst not thirst. And that was in shadow, this is in reality.

49. If that which excites thy wonder is a shadow, how great is that, the very shadow of which excites thy wonder? Hear how that the things which happened

¹ Rev. xxii. 13.

² An allusion to Gen. xiv. 18.

³ Ps. lxxviii. (lxxvii. Vulg.) 24; cf. Ex. xvi. 4.

⁴ Ps. lxxviii. (lxxvii. Vulg.) 25.

⁵ Jn. vi. 49.

⁶ Jn. vi. 51.

⁷ Jn. vi. 50, 51.

⁸ Cf. Ex. xvi. 20.

⁹ Ex. xvii. 6.

¹⁰ Jn. xix. 34.

unto the fathers are a shadow ; *they drank*, it says, *of the Rock that followed them ; and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased : for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things happened as a figure of us.*¹ Thou hast learnt that they are more excellent. For the light is better than the shadow, the reality is better than the figure, the body of the Author and Giver is better than manna from heaven.

CHAPTER IX

The change by which the elements of bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ is effected by Christ's words of institution. Illustrations from the miracles of the Old Testament and the Virgin Birth. The wonder and joy of the Sacrament are set forth in the language of the Song of Songs.

50. PERCHANCE thou mayest say, "I see something different ; how dost thou claim that it is the body of Christ which I receive?" It still remains for us to prove this also. What precedents, then, shall we employ? Let us prove that this is not what nature formed but what the blessing consecrated, and that there is greater force in a blessing than in nature, because by a blessing even nature itself is changed.

51. Moses held a rod, *he cast it down*, and it became a serpent ; again *he took hold of the tail* of the serpent, and it returned to its natural state of a rod.² Dost thou, then, see that both the serpent and the rod twice underwent a change of nature by prophetic grace? The rivers of Egypt ran with a pure flood of water ; suddenly blood began to well out from the veins of their sources, and there was naught that men could drink in the rivers.

¹ 1 Cor. x. 4-6.

² Ex. iv. 3, 4.

Again at the prophet's prayer the blood in the rivers ceased, the natural state of the waters came back.¹ The people of the Hebrews was everywhere surrounded, on one side walled in by the Egyptians, on the other shut in by the sea ; Moses lifted his rod, the water divided and assumed the character of solid walls,² and a footway appeared amid the waves. The Jordan turned backward contrary to nature and returned to the source of its stream.³ Is it not clear that the natural state both of the waves of the sea and of the course of the river was changed? The people of the fathers was thirsty, Moses touched the rock, and water flowed from the rock.⁴ Did not grace act contrary to nature, so that the rock poured forth water which it had not by nature. Marah was a most bitter stream, so that the thirsty people *could not drink*. Moses *cast wood into the water*, and the nature of the water lost its bitterness which was tempered by a sudden infusion of grace.⁵ In the time of Elisha the prophet one of the sons of the prophets had the iron knocked off his axe, and straightway it sank. He who had lost the axehead besought Elisha ; Elisha also *cast wood* into the water, and *the iron did swim*.⁶ Certainly we know that this also took place contrary to nature ; for iron is a heavier kind of thing than liquid water.⁷

52. We observe, therefore, that grace is of greater power than nature ; and yet it is only the grace of a prophet's blessing of which we are so far taking account. But if a human blessing was powerful enough to change nature, what do we say of the divine consecration itself

¹ Ex. vii. 20. The withdrawal of the plague is not recounted in Exodus, but is added by Ambrose on the analogy of Ex. viii. 12, 30.

² "in murorum specie congelavit." On *specie* see note on ix. 52. The passage referred to is Ex. xiv. 22. Ambrose makes a similar allusion to the incident in *de Spir. sancto*, iii. 4. 22.

³ Josh. iii. 16.

⁴ Ex. xvii. 6.

⁵ Ex. xv. 23-25.

⁶ 2 Kings vi. 4-6.

⁷ "gravior est enim ferri species quam aquarum liquor."

where the very words of the Lord and Saviour act?¹ For the sacrament which thou receivest, is consecrated² by the word of Christ. But if the word of Elijah was powerful enough to bring down fire from heaven,³ will not the word of Christ be powerful enough to change the characters of the elements?⁴ Thou hast read of the works of the whole creation *that he spake the word, and they were made; he commanded and they were created.*⁵ The word of Christ could make out of nothing that which was not; cannot it then change the things which are into that which they were not? For to give new natures to things is quite as wonderful as to change their natures.⁶

¹ According to Ambrose and the author of *de Sacramentis*, the consecration of the elements in the Eucharist is effected by the recital of the words of institution. See Introd. p. xxxviii, and cf. *de Sacram.* iv. 4. 14-19.

² "Christi sermone conficitur." The word *conficere* is used in classical Latin of the "celebration" of sacred rites. In Latin Church writers of the fourth century it is often used as a synonym of *consecrare*. Strictly speaking, it is the elements which are "consecrated," but by a proleptic use that which the elements become is made the object of the verb "to consecrate," and so Ambrose speaks of "consecrating the body" of Christ (ix. 53, *hoc quod conficimus corpus ex virgine est*).

³ 1 Kings xix. 38.

⁴ "ut species mutet elementorum." The word *species* denotes the particular, special nature by which one kind of thing is distinguished from another. Cf. ix. 51, "in murorum specie congelavit," "assumed the character of solid walls"; *ibid.*, "gravior est enim ferri species quam aquarum liquor," "iron is a heavier kind of thing than liquid water"; ix. 54, "alia species nominatur," "another kind of thing is named." Ambrose probably intends the words to represent the Greek term *εἶδος*, which is used in connexion with the change of the elements in the consecration of the Eucharist by Gregory of Nyssa, *Catechetical Oration*, ch. 37. Elsewhere in this treatise *species* is used in the less technical sense of "form" or "appearance," see iv. 25, where Ambrose discusses the application of the word to the dove at the Baptism; and cf. *de Sacram.* iv. 4. 20, "speciem sanguinis non video," where *species* probably means "the appearance" of blood.

⁵ Ps. xxxiii. (xxxii. Vulg.) 9.

⁶ The argument, as in *de Sacram.* iv. 4. 15, is that if it is possible for God to make something out of nothing, *à fortiori* it is

53. But why do we employ arguments? Let us employ the proper examples,¹ and by the example of the incarnation let us prove the truth of the mystery. Did the usage of nature precede when the Lord Jesus was born of Mary? If we look to the order of generation, it usually results from the union of a woman with a man. It is clear, therefore, that the Virgin gave birth contrary to the order of nature. And this body which we consecrate is from the Virgin; why do you seek the natural order here in the case of the body of Christ, when the Lord Jesus himself was born of the Virgin contrary to nature? It was certainly the true flesh of Christ which was crucified, which was buried; truly, therefore, the sacrament is a sacrament of that flesh.

54. The Lord² Jesus himself cries, *This is my body.*³ Before the blessing of the heavenly words another kind of thing is named,⁴ after consecration it is designated "body." He himself speaks of his blood. Before consecration it is spoken of as something else, after consecration it is named "blood." And thou sayest, "Amen,"⁵ that is, it is true. What the mouth speaks let

possible for Him to make something into something else. By a "new nature" then is meant one which does not succeed a former or older nature, but is the first of its kind to exist.

¹ "suis utamur exemplis." Lit., "examples belonging to itself," or "examples belonging to the nature of the case." The idea is that the mysteries of the Incarnation and the Sacrament belong to the same order and are essentially the same.

² The word "Lord" (*dominus*) before "Jesus" reflects the Milanese practice of prefixing that title whenever the name of Jesus was read in the Gospel. The same practice prevailed in the Gallican rite and still exists in the Ambrosian rite at Milan.

³ Mt. xxvi. 26; Mk. xiv. 22.

⁴ "alia species nominatur." See note on ix. 52 for *species*.

⁵ This response was probably made at the close of the Eucharistic prayer (or Canon). Ambrose is writing at a time when the Canon was recited aloud, and not silently, as was the later practice. In *de Sacram.* iv. 5. 25 the *Amen* is that of the communicants on reception of the sacrament.

the mind within confess ; what the speech utters let the affections feel.

55. With these sacraments, therefore, Christ feeds his Church ; by them the soul's very being is strengthened. And, seeing her continuous growth in grace, he rightly saith to her, *How fair are thy breasts become, my sister, my spouse ! how fair are they become from wine ! and the smell of thy garments is better than all spices. Thy lips, O my spouse, are a dropping honeycomb ; milk and honey are under thy tongue ; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon. A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse ; a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed.*¹ Whereby he signifies that the mystery should remain sealed with thee, that it be not profaned by the works of an evil life and the betrayal of chastity, that it be not divulged to those for whom it is not meet, that it be not spread among the unbelieving by babbling loquacity. Thou oughtest, therefore, to keep a good watch over thy faith, that an unblemished perfection of life and silence may be maintained.

56. Whence also the Church, guarding the deep and heavenly mysteries, repels the fiercer storms of wind and invites the sweetness of vernal grace ; and knowing that her garden cannot displease Christ, she calls the Spouse himself, saying, *Arise, O north wind ; and come, thou south ; blow upon my garden, and let my unguents flow down. Let my brother come down into his garden, and eat the fruit of his fruit-trees.*² For it hath good and fruitful trees, which have wet their roots with the stream of the sacred font, and have burst out into good fruit from the bud of a new fertility, so that they are no

¹ Cant. iv. 10. Some MSS. read *favum distillant* ; others, as in the text translated above, *favus distillans*. The latter is the Vulgate rendering, to which the reading in the present passage may have been assimilated.

² Cant. iv. 16, v. 1 (Vulg.).

longer cut down with the axe of which the prophet spake,¹ but are fertilized with the richness of the Gospel.

57. Thus, too, the Lord, rejoiced by their fruitfulness answers, *I have come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my unguents; I have eaten my food with my honey; I have drunk my drink with my milk.*² Why he speaks of food and drink, understand, O believer. Nay, this is not doubtful. Thou hast read that he tells us that in us he is in prison: even so in us does he eat and drink.³

58. Whence also the Church seeing so great grace, bids her sons, bids her neighbours come together to the sacraments, saying, *Eat, O my neighbours; and drink and be inebriated, my brethren.*⁴ What we are to eat, what we are to drink, the Holy Spirit hath made clear to thee elsewhere by the Prophet, saying, *Taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.*⁵ Christ is in that sacrament, because it is the body of Christ; therefore it is not bodily food, but spiritual. Whence also the Apostle says of the type of it that *our fathers ate spiritual meat, and drank spiritual drink.*⁶ For the body of God is a spiritual body; the body of Christ is the body of a divine Spirit, because Christ is Spirit⁷ as we read, *The spirit before our face is Christ the Lord.*⁸ And in the Epistle of Peter we have,

¹ Probably Ambrose has in mind Mt. iii. 10.

² Cant. v. 1. The LXX. and Vulg. have "wine" for "drink."

³ Mt. xxv. 36.

⁴ Cant. v. 1 (following LXX).

⁵ Ps. xxxiv. 8 (xxxiii. 9 Vulg.).

⁶ 1 Cor. x. 3, 4.

⁷ In these words Ambrose wishes to guard against any materialistic interpretation of the teaching given in the previous chapters. He has in view such passages as Jn. vi. 63, 1 Cor. xv. 44, 2 Cor. iii. 17. Athanasius, *Ep. ad Serap.* iv. 19, uses similar language.

⁸ Lamentations iv. 20, which in the LXX (here followed by the Latin Versions) runs: "The Spirit of our face, Christ the Lord, was taken in their destructions." The passage is frequently quoted

*Christ died for us.*¹ Thus this meat *strengthens* our heart, and this drink *maketh glad the heart of man*,² as the Prophet has declared.

59. Wherefore, having obtained all things, let us recognize that we are regenerate. Nor let us say, "How are we regenerate? Have we *entered into our mother's womb, and been born again*?³ I do not perceive the usage of nature." But there is nothing of the natural order here, where there is the excellency of grace. Accordingly it is not always the usage of nature that produces birth; we confess that Christ the Lord was born of a Virgin, and we deny the order of nature. For Mary did not conceive from a man; but she *was with child* of the Holy Ghost, as Matthew says that *she was found with child of the Holy Ghost*.⁴ If, then, *the Holy Ghost, coming upon*⁵ the Virgin effected conception, and fulfilled the work of generation, surely we must not doubt that, coming upon the font or upon those on whom baptism is conferred, he effects the reality of regeneration.

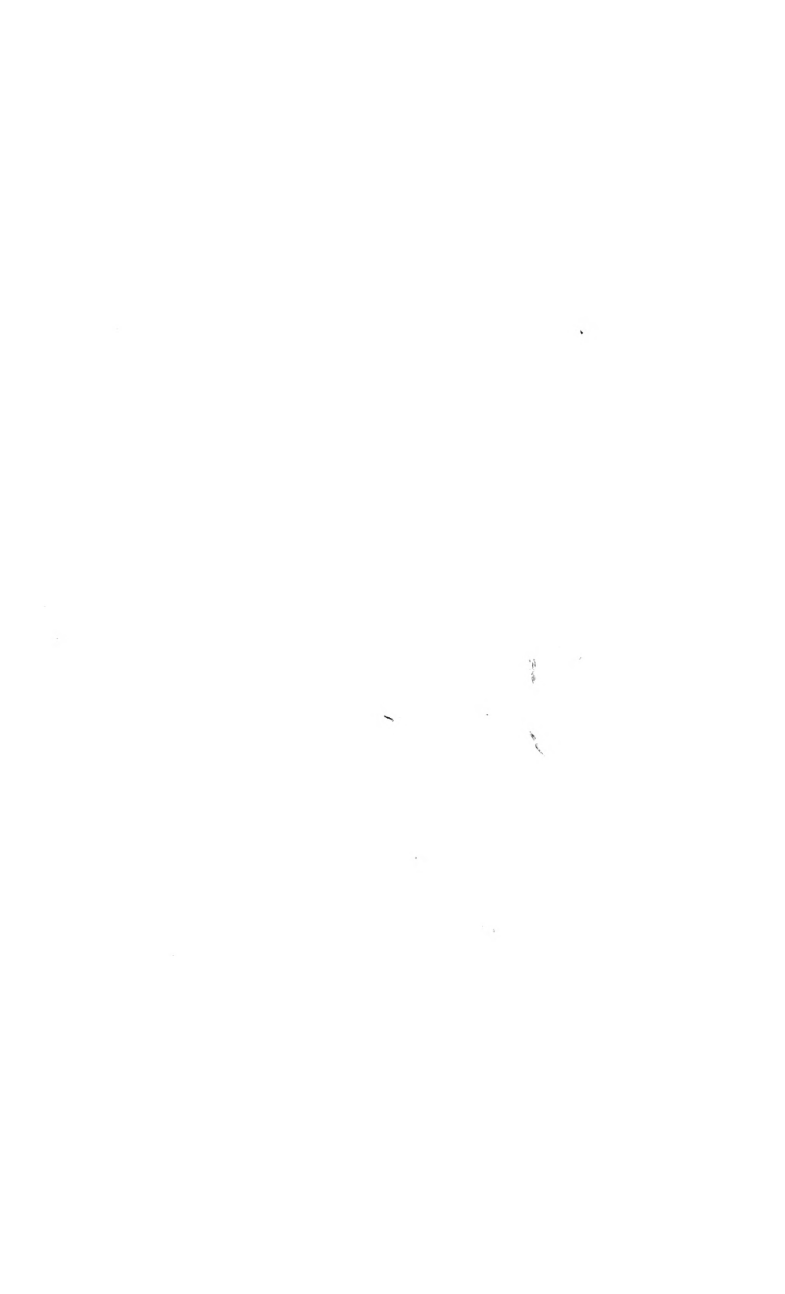
in early writers as Messianic. See Justin, *Ap.* i. 55; Iren., *adv. Haer.* iii. 10. 2; Tertullian, *adv. Marc.* iii. 6; *adv. Prax.* 14.

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 21, with "died" for "suffered." The link between this quotation and the preceding passage from Lamentations is supplied by the reference to the Messiah being "taken in their destructions" in that passage. This leads on to the thought of the Passion.

² Ps. civ. (ciii. Vulg.) 15.

³ Jn. iii. 4. ⁴ Mt. i. 18.

⁵ Lk. i. 35.



CONCERNING THE SACRAMENTS

BOOK I

CHAPTER I

Why instruction on the sacraments was deferred. The "opening of the ears."

1. THE sacraments which you have received are the theme of my discourse. To have given a reasoned account of these earlier would not have been right;¹ for in a Christian man faith is first. Therefore, at Rome² the title of "faithful" is given to those who have been baptized; and also *our father Abraham was justified by faith, not by works.*³ So you received baptism, you believed. For it is wrong for me to think otherwise; for thou wouldst not have been called to grace, had not Christ thought thee worthy of his grace.

2. Therefore, what did we do on the Saturday? What but "the opening"?⁴ Which mysteries of "opening" were performed, when the priest⁵ touched thine ears and

¹ Cf. *de Myst.* i. 2 (note).

² The reading "Romae" is found in most MSS. But the obvious difficulty that the name "faithful" was not peculiar to Rome suggests that there may be an error. Three MSS. read *recto nomine*, and the Roman edition substitutes *recte* ("rightly").

³ A summary of Rom. iv. 2, 3, 9.

⁴ Cf. *de Myst.* i. 3 (note).

⁵ The following is the use of the titles of the ministry in this work. "Deacon" is not used; its place is taken by "levite." The word *presbyter* is applied to the second order of the ministry. The highest order is denominated alike "bishop" and "priest" (*sacerdos*). In this chapter it is clear that "bishop" and

nostrils. It is this which our Lord Jesus Christ indicates in the Gospel, when a *deaf and dumb*¹ man was brought to him, and he touched his ears and his mouth: the ears, because he was deaf; the mouth, because he was dumb: and said, *Ephpheta*. It is a Hebrew word, which rendered into Latin is *adaperire*, that is, *Be opened*. The reason, therefore, that the priest touched thine ears was that thine ears might be opened to the discourse and the address of the priest.

3. But thou sayest to me, "Why the nostrils?" In that case, because he was dumb, he touched his mouth; that, since he could not speak heavenly mysteries, he might receive utterance from Christ. Also, in that case because it was a man; in our case, because women are baptized, and there is not the same purity in the servant² as in the Lord (for what comparison can there be, when the latter forgives sins, the former has his sins remitted?), therefore, on account of the grace bestowed by his act and office, the bishop touches not the mouth but the nostrils; that thou mayest receive *a sweet savour* of eternal godliness, and that thou mayest say, *For we are a sweet savour of Christ unto God*,³ as the holy Apostle said; and there may be in thee the full fragrance of faith and devotion.

"priest" are the same person (cf. § 3); and it appears that throughout the book the word "priest" is applied only to the bishop. This was the older practice (T.). We find, however, occasionally in earlier times, *e.g.* in Tertullian, an anticipation of its later application to the presbyter, and this use of the term became generally current in the West towards the close of the fourth century. For the use of terms in *de Myst.* see note on ii. 6.

¹ Mk. vii. 32 f.

² Cf. *de Myst.* i. 4.

³ 2 Cor. ii. 15.

CHAPTER II

The unction before baptism. Of the renunciations, and the dignity of the office of priests, who were witnesses of their baptismal promises.

4. WE came to the font, thou didst enter. Consider whom thou sawest ; consider what thou saidst, recall it carefully. A levite met thee, a presbyter met thee.¹ Thou wast anointed as Christ's athlete ; as about to wrestle in the fight of this world, thou didst profess the objects of thy wrestling. He who wrestles, has something to hope for ; where the contest is, there is the crown. Thou wrestlest in the world, but thou art crowned by Christ, and thou art crowned for contests in the world ; for, though the reward is in heaven, yet the earning of the reward is placed here.

5. When he asked thee, "Dost thou renounce the devil and his works," what didst thou reply? "I renounce." "Dost thou renounce the world and its pleasures," what didst thou reply? "I renounce." Be mindful² of thy words, and never let the contents of thy bond pass from thy memory. If thou givest a man thy note of hand, thou art held to be under acknowledgment of receiving his money ; thou art held bound, and the lender keeps thee to it, however unwilling thou mayest be. If thou deniest, thou goest before the judge, and there thou art convicted by thy bond.

6. Consider where thou didst promise, or to whom

¹ Cf. *de Myst.* ii. 6.

² This admonition is found in substance as a formula in the Milanese *Ordo* of Beroldus (Magistretti, p. 92), and the *Manuale Ambrosianum* (Magistretti, II. 467). See Thompson, *Offices of Baptism and Confirmation*, p. 129. It is not quoted in the parallel passage, *de Myst.* ii. 5. Mr. W. C. Bishop suggests to me that the words may have been introduced into the later Ambrosian rite from *de Sacram.* on the assumption that that work was composed by Ambrose and that the words describe a part of the service.

thou didst promise. Thou sawest a levite. But he is the minister of Christ ; thou hast seen him ministering at the altar. Therefore, thy note of hand is kept, not on earth, but in heaven. Consider where thou receivest the heavenly mysteries. If the body of Christ is here, the angels are stationed here also. *Where the body is, there also are the eagles,*¹ hast thou read in the Gospel. Where the body of Christ is, there also the eagles are wont to fly, that they may shun earthly things, pursue heavenly.

7. Why do I say this? Because men also are angels, whosoever proclaim Christ, and seem to be admitted into the place of angels. How? Take the case of the Baptist. John was born of a man and a woman. Yet hear how even he is an angel : *Behold, I send my angel before thy face, and he shall prepare thy way before thee.*² Take another passage of the prophet Malachi : *For the priest's lips keep knowledge, and they seek the law at his mouth : for he is the angel of God Almighty.*³ These things are said to extol the dignity of the priest, not to claim anything for personal merits.⁴

8. Therefore, thou hast renounced the world, thou hast renounced this life. Be careful. A man who owes money is always considering his bond. And thou who owest faith to Christ, keep faith, which is much more precious than money ; for faith is an eternal possession, money a temporal. And, therefore, always remember what thou hast promised, and thou wilt be more cautious. If thou keepest thy promise, thou wilt keep also thy bond.

¹ Mt. xxiv. 28 ; Lk. xvii. 37.

² Mal. iii. 1. There is a play on the word *angelus* which may mean either "messenger" or "angel."

³ Mal. ii. 7. Cf. *de Myst.* ii. 6.

⁴ Cf. *de Myst.* v. 27.

CHAPTER III

In the baptismal rite there was more than appeared to the outward eye.

9. THEN thou drewest near;¹ thou sawest the font, thou sawest also the priest above the font. Nor can I doubt, that this may have occurred to your mind, which occurred to the Syrian Naaman; for, although he was cleansed, yet he doubted previously. Why? I will tell; listen.

10. Thou didst enter, thou sawest the water, thou sawest the priest, thou sawest a levite. Let not some one haply say, "Is this all?" Yes, it is all. It is truly all,² where all is innocency, all is godliness, all is grace, all is sanctification. Thou hast seen all that thou couldst see with the eyes of thy body and with human vision. Thou hast not seen the things which are effected, because they cannot be seen. The things which are not seen are far greater than those which are seen; since *the things which are seen are temporal, the things which are not seen are eternal.*³

CHAPTER IV

The sacraments of Christians are more divine, and earlier, than those of the Jews. The meaning of the Passover.

11. THEREFORE, let us say this first (hold my words as a pledge, and exact full payment). We marvel at

¹ With this and the following section cf. *de Myst.* iii. 8.

² Mr. Colson suggests that, as the author in what follows contends that what is visible to the eye is not all that is involved in baptism, a negative answer is required. By removing the full stop after *Immo est totum* we get the sense, "No, the whole, the true whole, is where all is innocency."

³ 2 Cor. iv. 18. For the quotation cf. *de Myst.* iii. 8.

the mysteries of the Jews, which were given to our fathers, pre-eminent first in the antiquity of their sacraments, then in their holiness. This I promise, that the sacraments of Christians are more divine and older than those of the Jews.¹

12. What stands out so much as the fact that the people of the Jews *passed through the sea*?²—to speak for the present of baptism. Yet the Jews who *passed through* all died in the wilderness. But he who passes through this font, that is from earthly to heavenly things—for this is the “passing over,”³ therefore, *pascha*, that is, his *passover*, a passing over from sin to life, from guilt to grace, from defilement to sanctification—he who passes through this font, dies not, but rises again.

CHAPTER V

The story of Naaman, and the baptism of Christ.

13. To resume, *Naaman was a leper*.⁴ A certain maid said to his wife, “If my lord wishes to be cleansed, let him go into the land of Israel, and there he will find him who can take the leprosy from him.” She spoke to her mistress, the wife spoke to her husband, Naaman spoke to the king of Syria, who sent him as his favourite to the king of Israel. The king of Israel heard that a man had been sent to him to be cured of his leprosy,

¹ Cf. *de Myst.* iii. 9 (*init.*).

² 1 Cor. x. 1. Cf. *de Myst.* iii. 12, which is here expanded.

³ A reference to Ex. xii. 11, where the Latin has “est enim Phase (id est transitus) domini.” Cf. also Ex. xii. 27, “victima transitus domini est, quando transivit super domos filiorum Israel in Aegypto.” But the passages in Exodus refer to a “passing over” by “sparing”; the author applies “pass-over” (*transitus*) to the “passing through” the Red Sea by the Israelites (T.).

⁴ 2 Kings v. 1. With this and the following section cf. *de Myst.* iii. 16–17.

and *he rent his garment*. Then Elisha the prophet charges him: "*Wherefore hast thou rent thy garment, as if God were not able to cleanse a leper? Send him to me.*" He sent him, and, when he came, the prophet said, "*Go to Jordan, dip, and thou shalt be healed.*"

14. He began to reflect and to say: "Is this all? I have come from Syria into the land of Judah, and I am told, Go and descend into Jordan, dip, and thou shalt be healed, as if there were not better rivers in my native land." So *his servants* said to him, "My lord, why dost thou not carry out the word of the prophet? Do it rather, and make trial." Then he went to Jordan, dipped, and arose whole.

15. What, then, does it mean? Thou sawest water. But it is not all water that heals, but that water heals which has the grace of Christ. The element is one thing, the consecration is another; the work is one thing, the working another. The water is the work,¹ the working is of the Holy Spirit. Water does not heal, unless the Spirit has descended and consecrated that water; as thou hast read that, when our Lord Jesus Christ was giving the pattern of baptism, he *came to John*; and John said to him, "*I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?*" Christ answered him, "*Suffer it now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.*"² See how all righteousness is based on baptism.

16. Why, then, did Christ descend, unless that that flesh might be cleansed, the flesh which he took of our nature? For the washing away of his sins was not necessary for Christ, *who did no sin*; ³ but it was necessary for us who remain subject to sin. Therefore, if

¹ "Work" (*opus*) is here used, somewhat strangely, for the "matter" of the sacrament (T.). The sentence is omitted by some MSS.

² Mt. iii. 14, 15.

³ 1 Pet. ii. 22.

baptism is for our sake, a pattern has been established for us, the pattern of our faith has been set forth.

17. Christ descended, John stood by baptizing, and, 10, *the Holy Ghost descended as a dove*.¹ It was not a dove that descended, but *as a dove*. Remember what I said, Christ took flesh, not as it were flesh; but it was the reality of that flesh, real flesh, which Christ took. The Holy Spirit, however, descended from heaven, not in the reality of a dove, but in the likeness of a dove. Therefore, John saw and believed.

18. Christ descended, the Holy Spirit also descended. Why did Christ descend first, the Holy Spirit afterwards, since the form and practice of baptism provides that the font should be consecrated first, and then the person to be baptized should descend? For as soon as the priest enters, he makes an exorcism² over the element of water, afterwards he offers an invocation and a prayer, that the font may be consecrated, and the presence of the eternal Trinity may come down. But Christ descended first, the Spirit followed. For what reason? That the Lord Jesus might not seem himself as it were to need the mystery of sanctification; but that he might sanctify, and the Spirit also sanctify.

19. Therefore Christ descended into the water, *and the Holy Spirit descended as a dove*. Also God the Father spake from heaven. Thou hast the presence of the Trinity.³

¹ Mt. iii. 16; Mk. i. 10; Jn. i. 32. Cf. *de Myst.* iv. 24, 25.

² On the consecration of the font see *Introd.* p. xxii.

³ Cf. *de Myst.* v. 26.

CHAPTER VI

Baptism prefigured in the crossing of the Red Sea and in the story of the Flood.

20. AGAIN, that there was a figure of our baptism in the Red Sea¹ is asserted by the Apostle, when he says *that our fathers were all baptized in the cloud and in the sea.*² And he added, *Now all these things happened unto them by way of figure;*³ to them in a figure, but to us in reality. Then Moses held his rod: the people of the Jews had been shut in; on one side the Egyptian pressed on with arms, and on the other side the Hebrews were shut in by the sea. They could neither cross the seas, nor return to the enemy. They began to murmur.⁴

21. See that it tempt thee not, that they were heard. Although the Lord heard, yet they are not without fault who murmured. It is thy duty, when thou art in a strait, to believe that thou wilt escape, not to murmur; to appeal, to entreat, not to utter complaint.

22. Moses held his rod, and led the people of the Hebrews at night *in a pillar* of light, and in the day *in a pillar of cloud.*⁵ What is the light but truth, since it sheds a full and open brightness? What is the *pillar* of light but Christ the Lord, who scattered the shadows of unbelief, and poured the light of truth and spiritual grace on human hearts? The *pillar of cloud*, on the other hand, is the Holy Spirit. The people was in the sea, and the *pillar* of light went on before; then the *pillar of cloud* followed, as if the shadowing of the Holy Spirit. Thou seest that by the Holy Spirit and by the water he has shown a type of baptism.

¹ Cf. *de Myst.* iii. 12.

² 1 Cor. x. 2.

⁴ See Ex. xiv. 9 f.

³ 1 Cor. x. 11.

⁵ Ex. xiii. 21 f.; xiv. 19, 20.

23. As early as the flood¹ there was also a figure of baptism, and, certainly, the mysteries of the Jews did not as yet exist. Therefore, if the figure of our baptism preceded, thou seest that the mysteries of the Christians are earlier than were those of the Jews.

24. But meanwhile, in view of the weakness of our voice² and the consideration of the time at our disposal, let us content ourselves to-day with just having touched the mysteries concerning the holy font. To-morrow, if the Lord shall grant strength and ability to speak, I will declare them more fully. It behoves your holiness³ to have your ears prepared, your mind the more ready, that you may be able to retain what we may gather from the course of the Scriptures, and shall declare unto you, that you may have the grace of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, to which Trinity belongs an everlasting kingdom, from all ages, both now, and always, and for ever and ever.

¹ See for this ii. 1. 1 below.

² There is a similar reference to "weakness of voice" in the *Apologia David altera* (v. 29). But the work is not a genuine work of Ambrose, and bears (acc. to Bardenhewer, *Gesch. der altkirchl. Litt.* III. 536) much the same relation to the genuine *Apol. David as de Sacram.* bears to *de Myst.*

³ "Your holiness" (*sanctitas vestra*) is here a title addressed to the congregation, not to an individual (T.).

BOOK II

CHAPTER I

Further illustration from the story of the Flood. Of the baptisms of heathen and Jews.

1. YESTERDAY we began to expound how in the flood also there was a prefiguring of baptism. What is the flood, but that in which the righteous is saved to be a seed-plot of righteousness, while sin dies? Therefore, when the Lord saw that the transgressions of mankind were multiplied, he saved the righteous one alone with his offspring, but he bade the water rise even above the mountains. And therefore, in that flood all corruption of the flesh perished, only the family and pattern of the righteous survived. Is not the flood the same thing as baptism, whereby all sins are washed away, only the mind and grace of the righteous is revived?¹

2. There are many kinds of baptisms: but the Apostle cries, *one baptism*.² Why? There are baptisms of the Gentiles, but they are no baptisms.³ They are baths, baptisms they cannot be. The flesh is washed, but guilt is not washed away; nay, it is contracted in that bath. There were, however, baptisms of the Jews, some superfluous, others figurative. And the mere figure helps us, since it is the herald of reality.

¹ For this paragraph cf. 1 Pet. iii. 20 f., and Gen. vi. vii. (T.).

² Eph. iv. 5.

³ With this cf. *de Myst.* iv. 23, and note.

CHAPTER II

The healing of the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda.

3. WHAT was read yesterday?¹ *An angel*, it says, *went down at a certain season into the pool, and, so often as the angel descended, the water was troubled: and whosoever first descended, was made whole of every disease whatsoever he had.*² Which signifies a figure of our Lord Jesus Christ who was to come.

4. Why *an angel*? Because he himself is the *Angel of Great Counsel*.³ *At a certain season*, because he was kept till the last hour, that he might catch the day at its setting, and delay its setting.⁴ Therefore, as often as the angel descended, *the water was troubled*. Thou sayest perchance: "Why is it not troubled now?" Learn why. Signs for the unbelieving, faith for believers

5. *Whosoever first descended, was made whole of every sickness*. What is the meaning of *first*?⁵ Does it mean in time, or in honour? Understand in both ways. If it means *he who descended first* in time *was made whole* first, it signifies the people of the Jews, as opposed to the people of the Gentiles. If it means *he who descended first* in honour, that signifies that he who had the fear of God, the love of righteousness, the grace of charity, and the desire of purity, he rather *was made whole*. Yet at that time one only *was made whole*; at that time, I say, by way of figure *he who first descended* was alone

¹ Cf. *de Myst.* iv. 22. On the system of lessons indicated in this book see *Intro.* p. xxvii.

² Jn. v. 4. See note *de Myst.* iv. 22, and *Intro.* p. xli.

³ A reference to Isaiah, ix. 6, according to the LXX.

⁴ For this idea cf. Ambrose, *de Abraham* i. 50.

⁵ Reading *quid est prior*. Some MSS. read *qui* for *quid*. In that case *qui* is relative, not interrogative, and the meaning will be "He who is first, is he first in time or in honour?"

healed. How much greater is the grace of the Church, wherein all are saved, whosoever descend !

6. But observe the mystical sense. Our Lord Jesus Christ came to the pool ; many sick were lying there. And, naturally, there were many sick lying there, where only one was healed. Then he saith to the sick of the palsy, "Descend." He saith, "*I have no man.*"¹ Consider where thou art baptized.² What source can there be for baptism, save the cross of Christ, the death of Christ? Herein is the whole mystery, in that he suffered for thee. In him thou art redeemed, in him thou wilt be saved.

7. "*I have no man,*" he said : that is, *since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.*³ He could not descend, he could not be saved, who did not believe that our Lord Jesus had taken flesh of the Virgin. But this man who was looking for *the mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ*,⁴ waiting for him of whom it was said, *And the Lord shall send a man who shall save them*,⁵—he said, "*I have no man*" ; and therefore he deserved to attain to health, because he believed in one who was to come. Yet he would have been better and more perfect, if he had believed that he whose coming he hoped for had already come.

CHAPTER III

*The interpretation of the "captive maid" in the story of Naaman.
Summary of types already indicated.*

8. Now look at the types one by one. We said that baptism was prefigured in the Jordan, when Naaman

¹ Jn. v. 7. There is nothing in the Gospel parallel to the word "descend." The writer is quoting from memory.

² *i. e.* under what circumstances.

³ 1 Cor. xv. 20. The reading "*quia per hominem*" is an Old Latin rendering for Vulg. *quoniam enim per hom.*

⁴ 1 Tim. ii. 5.

⁵ Is. xix. 20, following the LXX.

the leper was cleansed. Who is that captive maid, but one who had the likeness of the Church, and exhibited a figure of it?¹ For the people of the nations was captive. It was captive: I do not mean a captivity under some hostile people; but I mean that captivity which is worse, when the devil and his minions rule with cruel sway, and subject to themselves the captive necks of sinners.

9. Therefore thou hast one baptism here, another in the flood; thou hast a third kind when the fathers were baptized in the Red Sea; thou hast a fourth kind in the pool, when *the water was troubled*. Now I ask thee whether thou oughtest not to believe that thou hast the presence of the Trinity in this baptism which is administered in the Church.

CHAPTER IV

Our Lord's command to baptize. Further O.T. types of baptism.

10. IT is, then, the same baptism which our Lord Jesus Christ speaks of in his Gospel to the Apostles: *Go, baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*² This is the word of the Saviour.

11. Tell me, O man. Elijah called fire from heaven, and fire came down from heaven.³ Elisha called on the name of the Lord, and the axe-head which had sunk came up out of the water.⁴ Here is another kind of baptism. Why? Because every man before baptism is weighed down like iron, and sinks: when he has been

¹ For this application see *de Myst.* iii. 18.

² Mt. xxviii. 19.

³ 1 Kings xix. 38, quoted in a different connexion in *de Myst.* ix. 52.

⁴ 2 Kings vi. 4-6, quoted in a different connexion, *de Myst.* ix. 51.

baptized he is no longer like iron, but now rises like the fruit-bearing wood, which is a lighter kind of thing.¹ Therefore in this instance there is also another figure. The axe was that with which *wood* was *cut down*. The haft fell from the axe, that is, the iron sank. The son of the prophet knew not what to do; but this alone he knew, to ask the prophet Elisha and to demand help. Then *he cast in wood*, and *the iron* was raised. Dost thou see, therefore, how the weakness of all men is raised on the cross of Christ?

12. Another example—though we are not keeping to our order, for who can recount all the deeds of Christ, as the Apostles said?² When Moses came into the desert and the people thirsted, and came to the spring of Marah, and wished to drink water (because, as soon as they drew, they tasted the bitterness, and began to be unable to drink), therefore Moses *cast wood* into the spring, and the water which previously was bitter began to be sweet.³

13. What does it mean, but that every creature is subject to corruption, that water is bitter to all. Although it is sweet for a time, although it is pleasant for a time, yet it is bitter, since it cannot take away sin. When thou hast drunk, thou wilt thirst; when thou hast imbibed the sweetness of the draught, thou wilt taste its bitterness. Water, therefore, is bitter. But when thou hast received the cross of Christ,⁴ and the heavenly

¹ "sed tanquam iam levior fructuosi ligni species elevatur." On *species* see note, *de Myst.* ix. 52.

² Cf. Jn. xxi. 25.

³ Ex. xv. 23 f. For this and the following section see *de Myst.* iii. 14.

⁴ Probably a reference to the signing of the catechumen with the cross, as in *de Myst.* iv. 20 (see note). In the passage of *de Myst.* (iii. 14), parallel to this section, the symbolism of the incident is applied to the signing of the water at the consecration of the font. (See note there.)

sacrament, it begins to be sweet and pleasant; and rightly sweet, because guilt is thereby cancelled. Therefore, if baptisms by way of figure could do so much, how much more can baptism in reality do?

CHAPTER V

The presence of the Holy Trinity in baptism is vindicated. The Spirit at the Baptism of Christ and on the day of Pentecost manifested by outward signs to convince unbelievers.

14. Now, then, let us consider. The priest comes; he says a prayer at the font; he invokes the name of the Father, the presence of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; he uses heavenly words.¹ What heavenly words? They are those of Christ, that we should *baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*² If, therefore, at the word of men, at the invocation of a saint, the presence of the Trinity came down, how much more does it come where the eternal word is acting? Do you wish to know that the Spirit descends? Thou hast heard that he *descended as a dove.*³ Why *as a dove*? That unbelievers might be called to belief. In the beginning there had to be a sign, later there ought to be the fulfilment.

15. Take another example. After the death of our Lord Jesus Christ the Apostles *were in one place*, and they were praying on the day of Pentecost. *And suddenly there came a great sound as if the Spirit were carried along with great violence, and there appeared divided tongues as of fire.*⁴ What does this mean, but the descent

¹ Cf. with this the account of the consecration of the font in *de Myst.* iii. 8, 14. There is no mention of the exorcism, which however is found in later Milanese and in Gallican books. See Thompson, *Offices of Baptism and Confirmation*, p. 130.

² Mt. xxviii. 19.

³ Mt. iii. 16; Mk. i. 10; Jn. i. 32.

⁴ Acts ii. 1-3.

of the Holy Spirit, who wished to show himself to unbelievers in bodily form also ; that is in bodily form by a sign, spiritually by a sacrament? Therefore, there was given an evident proof of his coming. But to us is now offered the privilege of faith. For in the beginning signs were shown for unbelievers ; now in the fulness of the Church we must gather truth not by a sign, but by faith.

CHAPTER VI

The Fall and its consequences. The redemptive grace of baptism.

16. Now let us examine what it is which is called baptism. Thou camest to the font, thou wentest down in it ; thou didst watch the high priest, thou didst see the levites and the presbyter in the font.¹ What is baptism?

17. *In the beginning* our God made man, so that, if he did not taste sin, he would not *surely die*.² He committed sin, he became subject to death, he was driven out of Paradise. But the Lord, who wished his benefits to endure, who wished to destroy all the wiles of the serpent, and also to root out everything harmful, first gave sentence upon the man, *Earth thou art, and unto earth thou shalt go* ;³ and he made man subject to death. It was a Divine sentence ; it could not be paid by human means. A remedy was granted that man should die, and rise again. Why? In order that the thing which had been previously counted as a condemnation, might be counted as a benefit. What is that thing but death? Thou askest how. Because death intervening makes an end of sin. For when we die, we certainly cease to sin. Therefore, the sentence seemed satisfied, because man who had been made to live, on

¹ Cf. *de Myst.* ii. 6, 8.

² Gen. i. 1 ; ii. 17.

³ Gen. iii. 19.

condition that he did not sin, was beginning to die. But, in order that the continual goodness of God might endure, man died, but Christ found the resurrection, that is, a way to restore the heavenly benefit which had been lost by the serpent's guile. Each, therefore, is for our good, since death is the end of sins, and the resurrection is the refashioning of our nature.¹

18. Nevertheless, that the craft or guile of the devil might not prevail in this world, baptism was devised. Concerning which baptism hear what the Scripture saith, nay, the Son of God, that *the Pharisees* who would not be *baptized with the baptism of John, rejected the counsel of God*.² Therefore, baptism is the counsel of God. How great is the grace, where there is the counsel of God.

19. Hear, therefore. In order that the bands of the devil might be loosed in this world also, a means was found that man might die while living, and while living rise again. What is "living"? It is the living life of the body, when it came to the font, and was dipped into the font. What is water, but from the earth? Therefore, the heavenly sentence is satisfied without the insensibility which death brings. Thy dipping paid that sentence, *Earth thou art, and unto earth thou shalt go*;³ the sentence fulfilled, there is room for the heavenly benefit and remedy. So then, water is from the earth; Moreover the conditions of our life did not allow that we should be covered with earth, and rise from the earth; further, it is not earth, but water, that washes. Therefore the font is, as it were, a burial.⁴

¹ The teaching of this passage on the place of death and the resurrection in the Divine economy shows the influence of Greek theology, and recalls the similar teaching of Methodius and Gregory of Nyssa.

² Lk. vii. 30.

³ Gen. iii. 19.

⁴ This exposition of the significance of baptism again finds a close parallel in Eastern theologians, e.g. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. Myst.* ii. 4. 5; Gregory of Nyssa, *Or. Cat.* 35.

CHAPTER VII

The threefold confession of faith and the threefold immersion in baptism described and explained. The unction after baptism.

20. THOU wast asked,¹ "Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty?" Thou saidst, "I believe," and didst dip, that is, thou wast buried. Again thou wast asked, "Dost thou believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in his Cross?" Thou saidst, "I believe," and didst dip; therefore, thou wast also *buried with Christ*;² for he who is *buried with Christ*, rises again with Christ. A third time thou was asked, "Dost thou believe also in the Holy Ghost?" Thou saidst, "I believe," and didst dip a third time, that the triple confession might absolve the manifold fall of thy former life.

21. Thus (that we may give you an example), after the holy Apostle Peter seemed to have fallen during the Lord's passion by the weakness of human nature, he who had previously denied was afterwards thrice asked by Christ if he loved Christ, that he might cancel and annul that fall. Then he said, "*Thou knowest, Lord, that I love Thee.*"³ He said it thrice, that he might be thrice absolved.⁴

22. Therefore, the Father forgives sin, just as the Son forgives; likewise also the Holy Ghost. But he bade us be baptized in one name, that is, *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. Wonder not that he spoke of one name, when there is one Substance, one Divinity, one Majesty. This is the

¹ With this section cf. *de Myst.* v. 21, 28.

² Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12.

³ Jn. xxi. 15 f.

⁴ There is a similar application in Ambrose, *de Spir. sancto*, ii. 10. 105.

name of which it was said, *Wherein all must be saved*.¹ In this name ye have all been saved, ye have been restored to the *grace of life*.²

23. Therefore the Apostle cries, as you have heard in the lesson just read, that *whosoever is baptized, is baptized in the death of Jesus*.³ What is *in the death*? It is that, as Christ died, so thou also shouldst taste of death; that, as Christ *died unto sin*, and *liveth unto God*,⁴ so thou also shouldst be dead unto the former allurements of sins through the sacrament of baptism, and shouldst rise again through the grace of Christ. It is a death, therefore; but not a death in the reality of bodily death, but in the likeness. For when thou dippest thou takest on the likeness of death and burial, thou receivest the sacrament of that cross, because Christ hung on the cross, and his body was pierced with nails. Therefore, when thou art crucified, thou cleavest to Christ; thou cleavest to the nails of our Lord Jesus Christ; let not the devil be able to tear thee away. Let the nail of Christ hold thee fast, seeing that the weakness of human nature is seeking to call thee back.

24. Therefore thou didst dip, thou camest to the priest.⁵ What did he say to thee? "God the Father Almighty," he saith, "who hath regenerated thee by water and the Holy Ghost, and hath forgiven thee thy sins, himself anoint thee unto eternal life."⁶ See whereunto thou art anointed; "unto eternal life," he saith. Do

¹ Cf. Acts iv. 12.

² An allusion to 1 Pet. iii. 7.

³ Rom. vi. 3, freely quoted.

⁴ Rom. vi. 10.

⁵ On the word "priest" (*sacerdos*), used here to denote the bishop see note on i. 1. 2. Cf. the parallel passage in *de Myst.* vi. 29.

⁶ This prayer, with slight variations, is found in the two Roman Sacramentaries, the Gregorian (Muratori, *Lit. Rom. Vet.* ii. 65; Wilson, H.B.S., p. 57), and the Gelasian (Wilson, p. 86); also in the *Missale Gallicanum vetus* (Muratori, ii. 741), and in the Bobbio Missal (Muratori, ii. 851).

not set this life before that life. For example, if any foe arise, if he wishes to take away thy faith, if he threatens death to make some one transgress, see what thou choosest. Do not choose that wherein thou wast not anointed, but choose that wherein thou wast anointed, so as to prefer eternal life to temporal life, through Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

BOOK III

CHAPTER I

The significance of the unction upon the head, and the meaning of "regeneration." The washing of the feet of the newly-baptized is defended and explained.

1. YESTERDAY we discoursed on the font, whose appearance is somewhat like that of a tomb in shape;¹ into which, believing in the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, we are received, and plunged, and emerge, that is, we are raised up. Moreover, thou receivest *myron*,² that is, *ointment upon the head*. Why upon the head? Because *the senses of a wise man are in his head*,³ says Solomon. For wisdom is lifeless without grace; but when wisdom has received grace, then its work begins to be perfect. This is called regeneration.⁴

2. What is regeneration? Thou readest in the Acts of the Apostles that the verse which is found in the second Psalm, *Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee*, appears to refer to the resurrection. For the holy Apostle Peter in the Acts of the Apostles interpreted it thus, that at the time that the Son rose from the dead,

¹ The font in early times, was sunk into the floor of the baptistery; it was often square, and thus resembled one class of tombs (T.).

² *μύρον*; oil mingled with balsam; it is employed for the unction after baptism (T.). For the quotation, cp. *de Myst.* vi. 29.

³ Eccl. ii. 14. The passage is quoted more correctly in *de Myst.* vi. 30. Here the writer, as often, develops the ideas suggested by *de Mysteriis*, and connects the unction with the gift of wisdom.

⁴ On the relation of the unction to baptism and confirmation see *Introd.* pp. xxv f.

the Father's voice rang out, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*.¹ Whence he is also called *the first-born from the dead*.² Therefore, what is resurrection, but when we rise from death to life? So, therefore, in baptism also, since there is a likeness of death, without doubt when thou dost dip and rise again, there is a likeness of the resurrection. Rightly, therefore, according to the interpretation of the Apostle Peter, as that resurrection was a regeneration, so also is this resurrection a regeneration.

3. But what dost thou mean by this dipping in the water? Is it for this reason that thou art perplexed,³ that hesitation possesses thee? Certainly, we read, *Let the earth bring forth from herself fruit that springs up*. Likewise also thou hast read of the waters, *Let the waters bring forth living creatures*, and living creatures were born.⁴ And those, indeed, were in the beginning of creation; but for thee it has been reserved that water should regenerate thee to grace, as it generated those others to life. Imitate the fish, which, though it has obtained less grace, yet should fill thee with wonder. It is in the sea, and above the waves; it is in the sea, and swims over the billows. In the sea the storm rages, the winds howl; but the fish swims, it does not sink, because it is wont to swim. Therefore this world is a sea to thee also. It has divers billows, heavy waves, fierce storms. And do thou be a fish, that the wave of the world sink thee not. Well, however, does the Father say to the Son, *This day have I begotten thee*; that is, when thou didst redeem the people, when thou

¹ The passage, here attributed to St. Peter, is found in St. Paul's speech at Antioch of Pisidia (Acts xiii. 33).

² Col. i. 18.

³ *peregrinarius*. Cf. 1 Pet. iv. 12 (Vulg.), *nolite peregrinari in fervore*.

⁴ See Gen. i. 11, 20. Both passages are quoted inexactly.

didst call them to the kingdom of heaven, when thou didst fulfil my will, thou didst prove thyself to be my son.

4. Thou camest up out of the font. What followed? ¹ Thou hast heard the lesson. The high priest was girt up (for though presbyters also carried it out, yet the ministry is begun by the high priest), the high priest, I say, was girt up, and washed thy feet. What is this sacrament? ² Doubtless thou hast heard that when the Lord had washed the feet of the other disciples, *He cometh to Peter*; ³ and *Peter saith to him, Dost thou wash my feet?* That is, Dost thou, the Lord, wash the feet of the servant? Dost thou, the spotless, wash my feet? Dost thou, the maker of the heavens, wash my feet? Thou hast this in another place also. *He cometh to John*, and John saith to him, "*I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?*" ⁴ I am a sinner, and dost thou come to me a sinner, that thou mayest as it were lay down thy sins *who hast done no sin?* ⁵ See *all righteousness*, ⁶ see the humility, see the grace, see the sanctification: ⁷ *Unless I wash thy feet*, he saith, *thou wilt have no part with me.* ⁸

5. We are not ignorant that the Roman Church has not this custom. Her type and form we follow in all things; however she has not this custom of washing the

¹ With this section cf. *de Myst.* vi. 31, with note. See also *Intro.* p. xxiv.

² The word used is *mysterium*, which is here equivalent to "sacrament" in the wider sense (T.).

³ Jn. xiii. 6.

⁴ Mt. iii. 14.

⁵ 1 Pet. ii. 22.

⁶ Mt. iii. 15.

⁷ The clause is somewhat compressed. The meaning is:—See how "all righteousness" is fulfilled in both examples; see the humility displayed by our Lord; see the grace and sanctifying virtue of this sacrament. *Sanctificatio* is used, as below in § 5, for the virtue and effect of a sacrament (T.).

⁸ Jn. xiii. 8. The form of the quotation agrees with that found in the parallel passage, *de Myst.* vi. 31.

feet. See then, perhaps she has declined it on account of the numbers.¹ There are, however, some who say and try to urge that this ought to be done, not as a sacrament, not at baptism, not at the regeneration; but only as we should wash the feet of a guest. The latter is an act of humility, the former a work of sanctification.² Accordingly, learn how it is a sacrament and a means of sanctification: *Unless I wash thy feet, thou wilt have no part with me.* This I say, not to find fault with others, but to recommend my own usage.³ In all things I desire to follow the Roman Church. Yet we too are not without discernment; and what other places have done well to retain, we too do well to maintain.

6. It is the Apostle Peter himself that we follow, to his devotion we cling. What does the Roman Church answer to this? Certainly the Apostle Peter himself supports us in this claim, he who was priest of the Roman Church. Peter himself says, *Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.*⁴ Look at the faith. His demurring at first showed his humility; his offer afterwards showed his devotion and faith.

7. Because he had said *my hands and my head*, the Lord answered him, *He that hath washed needeth not to wash again, save to wash his feet only.*⁵ Why is this? Because in baptism all guilt is washed away.⁶ Guilt,

¹ If the number of candidates for baptism was very large, the ceremony of washing the feet would be long and laborious (T.).

² Similarly, Augustine (*Ep.* lv. (*ad Januar.*) 33), maintained that the "feet washing" was a type of humility, but not a part of the sacrament of baptism. On the "feet washing" in Africa see Thompson, *Offices of Baptism and Confirmation*, p. 108.

³ If *vel* be read for *sed*, we should get a good sense, "or to commend my own services."

⁴ Jn. xiii. 9. On the text of this and the following quotation see Introd. p. xl.

⁵ Jn. xiii. 10.

⁶ Cf. with this *de Myst.* vi. 32 (note). The writer here modifies Ambrose's treatment of the question.

therefore, vanishes. But, because Adam was tripped up by the devil, and poison was poured over his feet, therefore thou wastest thy feet ; that at that point where the serpent made his treacherous attack a stronger reinforcement of sanctification may be applied, that he may not be able to trip thee up afterwards. Therefore, thou wastest thy feet, to wash off the poison of the serpent. It is a help towards humility also, that in a sacrament we should not shrink from that which we scorn in an act of service.

CHAPTER II

The "spiritual seal" and the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit. The effect of baptism illustrated from the healing of the blind man in John ix. Those who deny the need of baptism are refuted.

8. THERE follows the spiritual seal,¹ which you have heard mentioned in the lesson to-day. For after the font it remains for the "perfecting"² to take place, when, at the invocation of the priest, the Holy Spirit is bestowed, *the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and godliness, the spirit of holy fear,*³ as it were seven virtues of the Spirit.

9. And, indeed, all virtues belong to the Spirit ; but these are as it were cardinal, as it were principal.⁴ For what is so principal, as godliness ? What is so principal, as the knowledge of God ? What is so principal, as strength ? What is so principal, as the counsel of God ?

¹ Cf. *de Myst.* vii. 41, 42.

² "Perfectio" is almost a technical term for the rite following baptism, *i. e.* confirmation (T.).

³ Is. xi. 2. Cf. *de Myst.* vii. 42 (note).

⁴ The words *principales virtutes* recall Ambrose, *de Off.* i. 24. 115. The term *cardinales virtutes* is found in Ambrose, *Exp. in Luc.* v. 49.

What is so principal, as the fear of God? As the fear of the world is weakness, so the fear of God is great power.

10. These are the seven virtues, when thou art sealed;¹ for, as the holy Apostle saith, *The wisdom of our God is manifold.*² And, as the wisdom of God is manifold, so is the Holy Ghost manifold, who hath divers and various virtues. Whence also we speak of the *God of hosts*;³ which can be applied to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. But that belongs to another discourse, another time.

11. After this what follows? Thou hast to come to the altar,⁴ whither thou hast not come before; thou hast to see the things which thou didst not see before, that is, the mystery which thou hast read in the Gospel;⁵ if, however, thou hast not read it, thou hast certainly heard it. A blind man presented himself to the Saviour to be healed. And he, who healed others merely by a word and utterance, and brought back the light of the eyes by a command, yet in the book of the Gospel which is entitled "according to John,"—who truly beyond the others saw great mysteries, and described, and declared them:—he wished to prefigure this mystery⁶ in that miracle. All the Evangelists, indeed, were holy, all the Apostles, except the traitor—all were holy; yet Saint John, who wrote his Gospel last, having been sought and chosen by Christ to be in a sense his kinsman,⁷ uttered eternal mysteries with a louder trumpet. Whatever he spoke is a mystery. Another Evangelist told of the cure of a blind man; Matthew did, Luke

¹ *consignaris.*

² Eph. iii. 10.

³ *Deus virtutum*, as often in the Latin Psalter.

⁴ Cf. *de Myst.* 43 (*init.*).

⁵ Jn. ix. 1 f.

⁶ The word *mysterium* in this passage, as elsewhere, is used in various senses. It is a "sacrament," "a passage of Scripture with an inner meaning," and "a divine purpose" (T.).

⁷ Possibly a reference to Jn. xix. 26, 27.

did, Mark did. What does John alone say?—He took *clay, and anointed his eyes, and said unto him, "Go to Siloam."* And rising he went, and washed, and came seeing.¹

12. Consider thou also the eyes of thine heart. Formerly thou sawest only the things that are bodily, with bodily eyes; but the things which pertain to the sacraments thou wast not yet able to see with the eyes of the heart. Therefore, when thou gavest thy name,² he took *clay, and anointed thine eyes*. What does it mean? It means that thou shouldst confess thy sin, recognize thy guilt, repent of thy trespasses, that is, acknowledge the lot of human birth. For although he who comes to baptism does not confess his sin,³ yet he makes a complete confession of all sins by the very fact that he asks to be baptized, that he may be justified, that is, pass from guilt to grace.

13. Do not think it superfluous. There are some⁴—I know for certain there was one who said so; when we said to him, "At thy time of life thou shouldest certainly be baptized," he objected, "Why should I be baptized? I have no sin. Have I contracted sin?" He had no

¹ Jn. ix. 6. This particular incident is not found in the other Evangelists, but similar cures of blind men are recorded in Mt. ix. 27 f.; xii. 22; xx. 30 f.; Mk. viii. 22 f.; x. 46 f.; Lk. xviii. 35 f.

² *i. e.* as a candidate for baptism (T.). See Introd. p. xi.

³ Ambrose, *Exp. in Luc.* vi. 3, speaks of a "confession of sin" in connexion with baptism, and some commentators see in the present passage a further indication that *de Sacramentis* is not the work of Ambrose, as the writer suggests that this confession may be omitted, and that the very fact of seeking baptism is in itself a "confession" of sin. But the language of Ambrose, in the passage cited above, is too vague and general to warrant the deduction drawn from it.

⁴ In this passage it has been thought that the writer has in view the Pelagian denial of original sin. If so, the passage is a further indication that the work is later than Ambrose. See Cabrol, *Dict. d'archéologie et de lit. chrét.* I. 1386, art. "Ambrosien (rit)."

clay, because Christ had not washed,¹ that is, had not opened, his eyes; for no man is without sin.

14. Therefore, he who takes refuge in the baptism of Christ acknowledges himself a man. So on thee also he has put clay, that is, modesty, prudence, reflection upon thy weakness, and he has said to thee, "*Go to Siloam.*" What is Siloam? *Which is*, it says, *by interpretation, Sent.* That is, Go to that fount² wherein the Cross of the Lord is proclaimed;³ go to that fount wherein Christ redeemed the faults of all men.

15. Thou didst go, thou didst wash, thou camest to the altar. Thou didst begin to see what thou hadst not seen before; that is, through the font of the Lord and the preaching of the Lord's passion thine eyes were then opened. Thou who seemedst before to be blinded in heart, didst begin to see the light of the sacraments. Therefore, dearly beloved brethren, we have arrived at the altar, to a richer theme. And for the reason that the time is advanced, we cannot begin a fresh subject; since it is a lengthier theme, let what has been said to-day suffice; and to-morrow, if it please the Lord, we will treat of those sacraments.

¹ *laverat*. The Rom. edition and one MS. read *liniverat*. Possibly *leverat*, the reading of several MSS. is correct: *i. e.* "had not anointed."

² The word here, *fontem*, can mean either a "spring" or a baptismal font; the writer plays on the double meaning (T.).

³ Cf. *de Myst.* iii, 14 (note).

BOOK IV

CHAPTER I

The symbolism of the Tabernacle applied to Christian baptism.

1. UNDER the old covenant *the priests* used to enter continually *into the first tabernacle*; *into the second tabernacle the high priest* entered *once in the year*. Which the Apostle Paul¹ clearly recalling in the Epistle to the Hebrews, explains the tenor of the Old Testament. Now there was in *the second tabernacle the manna*; there was also *the rod of Aaron which* withered and afterwards *blossomed* again; there was likewise the censer.²

2. What is the purpose of this? It is that you may understand what is *the second tabernacle*, into which the priest introduced you, into which *the high priest* was accustomed to enter *once in the year*, that is, to the baptistery,³ where *the rod of Aaron blossomed*; it was withered before, afterwards it blossomed again. Thou too wast withered, and dost begin to blossom again in the streaming font. Thou hadst withered through sins, thou hadst withered through faults and trespasses; but

¹ For the ascription of the Ep. to the Hebrews to St. Paul see *de Myst.* viii. 45 (note).

² In the above passage the author has in mind Heb. ix. 4-7. The word *thymiaterium* (rendered "censer") is a transliteration of the Greek, which has been variously rendered "censer" or "altar of incense." The Vulgate has *turibulum*. That the writer means "censer" is shown by iv. i. 4.

³ On the baptistery as "the holy of holies" see *de Myst.* ii. 3. The parallel to "once in the year," in the author's mind, is to be found in the fact that Easter was the normal time for baptism.

now thou beginnest to bear fruit, *planted by the rivers of water*.¹

3. But perhaps thou sayest, "What has this to do with the people, if the priest's rod had withered and blossomed again?" What is the people itself but priestly? To whom it was said, *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation*,² as saith the Apostle Peter. Every one is anointed to the priesthood, is anointed to the kingdom also; but it is a spiritual kingdom and a spiritual priesthood.

4. In the *second tabernacle* is the censer also, which is wont to diffuse a sweet savour. So you also are now *a sweet savour of Christ*; ³ no longer is there in you any share of sins,⁴ any savour of ranker error.

CHAPTER II

The grace of innocence and "renewal of youth" resulting from baptism.

5. It follows that you come to the altar. You began to come; the angels watched, they saw you approaching, and that human nature, which before was stained with the murky filth of sin, suddenly shone bright in their sight. And accordingly they said, *Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness made white?*⁵ The angels then also wonder. Wilt thou know that they wonder? Hear then the Apostle Paul saying that those things have been bestowed on us *which even angels long to*

¹ Ps. i. 3.

² 1 Pet. ii. 9.

³ 2 Cor. ii. 15.

⁴ *sors delictorum*. Some MSS. read *sordes*, "defilement."

⁵ Cant. viii. 5. Cf. *de Myst.* vii. 35. Like Ambrose the author reads *dealbata* ("made white"), following LXX. The words "from the wilderness" are found in Heb. and Vulg., but not in LXX.

see;¹ and again, *What eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*²

6. Then recall what thou hast received. Holy David the prophet saw this grace in a figure, and desired it. Wilt thou know that he desired it? Again hear him saying, *Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.*³ Why? Because snow, although it is white, quickly turns black with any dirt, and is spoilt; this grace which thou hast received, if thou hold fast that which thou hast received, will be lasting and eternal.

7. Thou camest thus with desire to the altar, since thou hadst seen such grace. Thou camest with desire to the altar, to receive the sacrament; let thy soul say, *And I will go unto the altar of my God, unto God who maketh glad my youth.*⁴ Thou hast put off the old age of sins, thou hast taken the youth of grace; this the heavenly sacraments bestowed on thee. Therefore, again hear David saying, *Thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle's.*⁵ Thou beginnest to be a good eagle, seeking heaven, scorning earthly things. Good eagles are about the altar; for *where the body is, there also are the eagles.*⁶ The altar is a type of the body,⁷ and the body

¹ 1 Pet. i. 12. The writer, by a slip of memory, attributes the words to St. Paul.

² 1 Cor. ii. 9. Cf. *de Myst.* viii. 44, note.

³ Ps. li. 7 (l. 9, Vulg.). Cf. *de Myst.* vii. 34.

⁴ Ps. xliii. (xlii. Vulg.), 4. Cf. *de Myst.* viii. 43, where the psalm is similarly quoted in connexion with the approach to the altar. But the use of this psalm, as part of the preparation in the Roman Mass, is of late date, and its appearance in some editions of the Ambrosian Missal is due to borrowing from the Roman rite (see Ceriani, *Notitia Lit. ambros.* p. 24).

⁵ Ps. ciii. (cii. Vulg.), 5.

⁶ Mt. xxiv. 28; Lk. xvii. 37. Cf. i. 2. 6.

⁷ The sense of this expression is illustrated by the following passage from the *Glossa Ordinaria* (Migne, *P.L.*, cl. 405). The Body of Christ "is called an altar in other places of the divine

of Christ is on the altar ; ye are eagles, renewed by the washing away of sin.

CHAPTER III

Comparison of the Jewish and Christian sacraments. Melchizedek a type of Christ.

8. THOU camest to the altar, thou sawest the sacraments laid upon the altar, and thou didst wonder at those creatures ;¹ yet they are ordinary and familiar.

9. Perhaps some one will say: "To the Jews God granted such grace, *he rained down manna upon them*² from heaven ; what more has he given to his faithful, what more has he bestowed on those to whom he promised more ?"

10. Hear what things I say, namely, that the mysteries of the Christians are older than those of the Jews,³ and the sacraments of the Christians are more divine than those of the Jews. How ? Hear. When did the Jews begin ? At the earliest, with Judah, the great-grandson of Abraham ; or, if thou preferrest to take this view, with the Law, that is, when the Jews were deemed worthy to receive the Law. Therefore, they were called Jews from the great-grandson of Abraham, or since the time of holy Moses. And if God *rained down manna* from heaven then upon the murmuring Jews, still there

Scriptures also, because on it, that is, on faith in it, as on an altar, our offered prayers and works become acceptable" (quoted by Westcott on Heb. xiii. 10). (T.)

¹ *creaturam*. Cf. Book of Common Prayer, "these thy creatures of bread and wine." The writer is thinking of the placing of the elements upon the altar. From Ambrose (*in Ps. cxviii.* prol. 2) it appears that at Milan, as elsewhere in the West, the people made their offerings of bread and wine for the Eucharist, but the newly-baptized did not partake in this "offering" before the octave of Easter.

² Ps. lxxviii. (lxxvii. Vulg.) 24. Cf. *de Myst.* viii. 44.

³ With this section cf. *de Myst.* viii. 45, 46.

was for thee a yet earlier figure of these sacraments, when Abraham was alive, when he gathered *the men born in his house, three hundred and eighteen*, and then *pursued* the adversaries, delivering his nephew out of captivity; then he came in triumph; *Melchizedek the priest* met him, and offered him *bread and wine*.¹ Who had the *bread and wine*? Abraham had not. But who had? Melchizedek. He, then, is the author of the sacraments. Who is Melchizedek? He who is indicated as *King of righteousness, King of peace*.² Who is the *King of righteousness*? Can any man be *King of righteousness*? Who then is the *King of righteousness*, but the *Righteousness* of God, he who is the *Peace of God, the Wisdom of God*?³ He who could say, *My peace I give unto you, my peace I leave with you*.⁴

11. Therefore, first understand that these sacraments which thou receivest are older than are the sacraments of Moses, whatever they are that the Jews say they have; and that the Christian people began before the people of the Jews—we, however, as predetermined, while they actually bore the name.

12. Melchizedek, therefore, offered *bread and wine*. Who is Melchizedek? *Without father*, it says, *without mother, without order of generation, having neither beginning of days nor end of life*; this is in the Epistle to the Hebrews.⁵ He is *without father*, it says, and *without mother*. *Like unto whom? The Son of God*. The Son of God was born *without mother* in his heavenly generation, because he was born of God the Father only. And

¹ Gen. xiv. 14 f.

² Heb. vii. 2.

³ Eph. ii. 14; 1 Cor. i. 24.

⁴ Jn. xiv. 27. The variation in the order of the clauses is found in some Old Latin and Vulgate MSS.

⁵ Heb. vii. 3. The reading *generationis ordine* is apparently peculiar to the writer; but *generationis enumeratione* is found in Ambrose, *Ep.* lxiv. 49.

again, he was born *without father*, when he was born of the Virgin; for he was not generated of the seed of a man, but born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,¹ brought forth from a virgin womb, in all things *like to the Son of God*.² Melchizedek was also a priest; since Christ too is a priest to whom it is said, *Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek*.³

CHAPTER IV

The bread and wine of the Eucharist become Christ's body and blood in virtue of the words of consecration, which are Christ's own words. Illustrations from the Virgin birth and miracles of O.T.

13. WHO then is the author of the sacraments but the Lord Jesus? From heaven those sacraments came; for all counsel is from heaven. But it was truly a great and divine miracle that God *rained down manna* from heaven, and the people ate without toiling.

14. Thou sayest perhaps, "My bread is ⁴ of the usual kind." But that bread is bread before the words of the sacraments; when consecration has been added, from bread it becomes the flesh of Christ. Let us therefore prove this. How can that which is bread be the body of Christ? By consecration. But in what words and in whose language is the consecration? Those of the Lord Jesus. For all the other things which are said in the

¹ The old Roman Creed, quoted by Rufinus, similarly has the words *qui natus est de spiritu sancto et Maria virgine*; the words in the text may be an echo of this (T.).

² Heb. vii. 3.

³ Heb. vii. 17. Cf. Ps. cx. (cix. Vulg.) 4.

⁴ Some see in this a reference to the offering of bread and wine by the people. But at Milan (see note on iv. 3. 8) the newly-baptized did not "offer" before the octave of Easter. Possibly the meaning is quite general: "the bread which I see is ordinary bread." With this section cf. *de Myst.* ix. 50.

earlier parts of the service are said by the priest—praises are offered to God, prayer is asked for the people, for kings, and the rest ;¹ when it comes to the consecration of the venerable sacrament, the priest no longer uses his own language, but he uses the language of Christ. Therefore, the word of Christ consecrates this sacrament.²

15. What is the word of Christ? That, to be sure, whereby all things are made. The Lord commanded, and the heaven was made ; the Lord commanded, and the earth was made ; the Lord commanded, and the seas were made ; the Lord commanded, and every creature was produced. Thou seest, therefore, how effective is the word of Christ. If, therefore, there is such power in the word of the Lord Jesus, that the things which were not began to be, how much more is it effective, that things previously existing should, without ceasing to exist, be changed into something else?³ The heaven

¹ In this description Probst (*Lit. des viert. Jahrh.* p. 249) sees a parallel to the order of the prayers in the Roman Canon. In the Gelasian Sacramentary the *Sanctus*, which corresponds to the "praises," is followed by the prayers *Te igitur* (a prayer for the Church and Pope) and *Memento, domine*, a prayer for the congregation "who offer this sacrifice of praise." The letter of Pope Innocent I to Decentius (416 A.D.) shows that at Rome in his time the names of offerers were recited within the Canon. But it is possible that the author of *de Sacram.* is not observing the strict order and that the prayers referred to are "the prayers of the faithful" earlier in the service. There is no prayer for kings in the Gelasian Canon, but such a prayer is found in the Good Friday prayers (Wilson, *Gel. Sacram.* p. 76), which are a survival of the "prayers of the faithful."

² Cf. *de Myst.* ix. 52 (note).

³ "ut sint quae erant et in aliud commutentur." The words have also been rendered "that they should be what they were and be changed into something else." Thus rendered the words have been interpreted as an assertion by the author of the continued existence, after consecration, of the natures of the bread and wine. The passage was discussed in the Eucharistic controversies of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Lanfranc and Alger of Liège appear to have interpreted the words in the above sense, but sought to evade the conclusions drawn from them by contending that the words refer to the outward appearances of bread and wine.

was not, the sea was not, the earth was not; but hear David saying, *He spake, and they were made: he commanded, and they were created.*¹

16. Therefore, that I may answer thee, it was not the body of Christ before consecration; but after consecration, I tell thee, it is now the body of Christ. *He spake, and it was made: he commanded, and it was created.* Thou thyself didst formerly exist, but thou wast an old creature; after thou wast consecrated, thou didst begin to be a new creature. Wilt thou know how thou art a new creature? *Everyone, it says, in Christ is a new creature.*²

17. Hear, then, how the word of Christ is wont to change every creature, and changes, at will, the ordinances of nature. In what way? thou askest. Hear; and, first of all, let us take an example from his generation. It is usual that a man is not generated save from a man and a woman and the use of marriage; but

One MS. omits the words altogether. The Roman edition reads *ut quae erant in aliud commutentur* ("that the things which were should be changed into something else"), and the same reading was known to Lanfranc. The variations in reading reflect the controversial use made of the passage. On the other hand, the translation given in the text, which is supported by Cardinal Perronne, appears to be justified on two grounds:—

(1) The author has in mind the parallel passage in Ambrose, *de Myst.* ix. 52. "The word of Christ could make out of nothing that which was not; cannot it then change the things which are into that which they were not? For to give new natures to things is quite as wonderful as to change their natures" (see notes).

(2) In the present passage the author is arguing that creation out of nothing is an even greater miracle than the conversion of existing things into something else. The greater implies the less. If the word of Christ can effect the one, it can effect the other. The words *ut sint* are not intended to lay stress on the continued existence of bread and wine *as bread and wine*, but emphasize the fact that the change effected in them does not involve destruction or a new act of creation. That is probably all that is in the author's mind.

¹ Ps. xxxiii. (xxxii. Vulg.), 9. Cf. *de Myst.* ix. 52.

² 2 Cor. v. 17 (freely quoted).

because the Lord willed it, because he chose this mystery,¹ Christ was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin, that is, *the mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*.² Thou seest, then, that he was born contrary to the ordinances and course of nature, he was born as man from a virgin.

18. Hear another example.³ The people of the Jews were hard pressed by the Egyptians; they were shut in by the sea. At the divine command Moses touched the waters with his rod, and the wave divided, certainly not according to the use of its own nature, but according to the grace of the heavenly command. Hear another.⁴ The people thirsted, they came to the spring. The spring was bitter; holy Moses *cast wood* into the spring, and the spring which had been bitter was made sweet, that is, it changed the use of its nature, it received the sweetness of grace. Hear also a fourth example.⁵ *The axe head had fallen into the waters*; as iron it sank by its own use. Elisha *cast wood*; straightway *the iron* rose, and *swam* upon the waters, certainly contrary to the use of iron, for the matter of iron is heavier than the element of water.

19. From all these examples, then, dost thou not understand how effectual is the heavenly word? If the heavenly word was effectual in the earthly spring, if it was effectual in other things, is it not effectual in the heavenly sacraments? Therefore thou hast learnt that what was bread becomes the body of Christ,⁶ and that wine and water are put into the chalice, but become blood by the consecration of the heavenly word.

¹ The mystery (*sacramentum*) is the Incarnation. Cf. 1 Tim. iii. 16 (T.). For this parallel with the Incarnation see *de Myst.* ix. 53.

² 1 Tim. ii. 5.

³ Ex. xiv. Cf. for this section *de Myst.* ix. 51.

⁴ Ex. xv. 23-25.

⁵ 2 Kings vi. 5-6.

⁶ *ex pane fit corpus Christi*. With this section cf. *de Myst.* ix. 52.

20. But perhaps thou sayest, "I do not see the appearance¹ of blood." But it has the likeness; for as thou hast taken *the likeness of the death*,² so also thou drinkest the likeness of the precious blood, that there may be no shrinking from actual blood, and yet the price of redemption may effect its work. Thou hast learnt, therefore, that what thou receivest is the body of Christ.

CHAPTER V

The words with which the priest consecrates the sacrament are quoted, and the sacrament is shown to be a greater gift than that of the manna.

21. WILT thou know that it is consecrated by heavenly words? Hear what the words are. The priest speaks.³ "Make for us," he says, "this oblation approved, ratified, reasonable, acceptable, seeing that it is the figure of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who⁴ the day before he suffered *took bread* in his holy hands, and *looked up to heaven* to thee, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God, and *giving thanks, he blessed, brake, and* having broken, delivered it to his apostles and *to his disciples, saying, Take, and eat ye all of this; for this is my body, which shall be broken for many.*

22. *Likewise* also *after supper*, the day before he suffered, he *took the cup, looked up to heaven* to thee, holy

¹ *speciem*. Here, as *video* suggests, it denotes "appearance," as in *de Myst.* iv. 25. See *de Myst.* ix. 52 (note).

² Rom. vi. 5.

³ On the prayers which follow see Intro. pp. xxx ff., and for the expression "*figure of the body . . . of Christ*," p. xxxv.

⁴ The recital of the institution is a conflation of the four accounts in Mt. xxvi. 26 f.; Mk. xiv. 22 f.; Lk. xxii. 19 f.; 1 Cor. xi. 23 f., with additions from the accounts of the feeding of the multitude in Mk. vi. 41 ("looked up to heaven") and Mk. viii. 6 ("gave to his disciples"). Both additions are found in the Roman Canon and in several Eastern rites.

Father, almighty, everlasting God, and *giving thanks*, blessed it and delivered it to his apostles and to his disciples, *saying, Take, and drink ye all of this; for this is my blood.*" Observe all those expressions. Those words are the Evangelists' up to *Take*, whether the body or the blood. After that they are the words of Christ; *Take, and drink ye all of this; for this is my blood.* And observe them in detail.

23. *Who the day before he suffered*, he says, *in his holy hands took bread.* Before it is consecrated, it is bread, but when the words of Christ have been added, it is the body of Christ. Therefore hear him saying: *Take and eat ye all of this; for this is my body.* And before the words of Christ it is a cup full of wine and water. When the words of Christ have operated then and there it is made to be¹ the blood of Christ which redeemed the people. Therefore, see in how many ways the word of Christ is mighty to change all things. There the Lord Jesus himself testifies to us that we receive his body and blood. Ought we to doubt of his trustworthiness and testimony?

24. Now come back with me to the point which I set out to prove. It is a great and awful thing that he rained manna on the Jews from heaven. But distinguish. What is greater, manna from heaven or the body of Christ? Certainly the body of Christ who is the maker of heaven. Then he who *ate manna died*. Whosoever eats this body shall have remission of sins and *shall never die.*²

25. Therefore [when thou receivest]³ it is not superfluous that thou sayest Amen, already in spirit confessing that thou receivest the body of Christ. The priest says

¹ *sanguis Christi efficitur.*

² A ref. to Jn. vi. 49, 50.

³ The words in brackets are omitted by some authorities.

to thee, The body of Christ. And thou sayest, Amen, that is, True.¹ What the tongue confesses let the heart hold fast.

CHAPTER VI

The sacrament a memorial of Christ's death and a proclamation of the forgiveness of sins.

26. BUT that thou mayest know that this is a sacrament, it was prefigured beforehand. Then learn how great is the sacrament. See what he says: *As often as ye do this, so often will ye make a memorial of me until I come again.*²

27. And the priest says: ³ Therefore having in remembrance his most glorious passion and resurrection from the dead and ascension into heaven, we offer to thee this spotless offering, reasonable offering,⁴ unbloody

¹ The words "the body of Christ" are the words of the priest at the administration, to which the communicants respond, *Amen*. Cf. *de Myst.* ix. 54 (note). There is good evidence of this custom both in East and West. See e. g. Augustine *Serm.* 272; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* xxiii. 21.

² The words appear to be a liturgical formula, concluding the recital of the institution. In that case "he says" refers to the priest (cf. "the priest says" in § 25). The words are based on 1 Cor. xi. 25, 26. The attribution to our Lord ("until I come") is found in the Liturgy of the Apostolic Constitutions and several Eastern rites, as well as in the Ambrosian Sacramentary of Biasca, and it appears as an addition by a later scribe in the Stowe Missal. The Roman Canon has the form *haec quotiescumque feceritis, in mei memoriam facietis*, and this appears to be attested about the middle of the fifth century in a *Commentary on the Psalms* attributed to Arnobius the younger (quoted by Dom Morin, *Revue Bén.* xxiv. (1907), pp. 404 f.). As Dom Connolly has pointed out to me, either the formula of *de Sacram.* represents a local variation, or the Roman form must have ousted an earlier form some time before Arnobius, if the passage ascribed to him is genuine.

³ This prayer corresponds to the Anamnesis of the Roman Canon.

⁴ Cf. Rom. xii. 1. The word for "offering" (*hostia*) is that used in the Latin version of Heb. xiii. 15 (*hostiam laudis*, "sacrifice of praise").

offering,¹ this holy bread and cup of eternal life : and we ask and pray that thou wouldst receive this oblation on thy altar on high by the hands of thy angels,² as thou didst vouchsafe to receive the presents of thy righteous servant Abel, and the sacrifice of our patriarch Abraham, and that which the high priest, Melchizedek offered to thee."

28. Therefore as often as thou receivest—what saith the Apostle to thee?—as often as we receive, we show the Lord's death ; if we show his death, we show remission of sins. If, as often as blood is poured forth, it is poured for remission of sins, I ought always to receive it, that my sins may always be forgiven me. I, who am always sinning, ought always to have a remedy.

29. Meanwhile, we have explained to you to-day, also, as much as we could. But to-morrow, Saturday, and on Sunday³ we will speak of the order of prayer as we are able. May the Lord our God preserve to you the grace which he has given and may he deign to illuminate more fully the eyes which he has opened for you, through his only begotten Son, our Lord God, king and saviour, through whom and with whom to him is praise, honour, glory, majesty, power with the Holy Spirit from all ages, both now and ever, and world without end.—AMEN.

¹ This expression is frequently found in early Christian writers, and in Eastern rites, as well as in some Gallican books.

² The Roman Canon has the singular "angel," possibly a reference to the angel in Rev. viii. 3 f. Cf. Tertullian, *de Orat.* 16.

³ On this see *Intro.* p. xx.

BOOK V

CHAPTER I

The writer returns to the story of Melchizedek, and gives two reasons why water is mixed with wine in the chalice.

1. YESTERDAY our sermon and discourse was carried as far as the sacraments of the holy altar. And we learn that those sacraments were prefigured in the times of Abraham, when holy Melchizedek offered sacrifice, *having neither beginning nor end of days*. Hear, O man, what the Apostle Paul says to the Hebrews. Where are those who say that the Son of God is of time? Of Melchizedek¹ it was said that he had *neither beginning nor end of days*.² If Melchizedek had not a beginning of days, could Christ have it? But the figure is not greater than the reality. Thou seest therefore that he himself *is the first and last*.³ First, because he is the author of all things; last, not because he comes to an end, but because he concludes all things.

2. We said, therefore, that the cup and the bread are set on the altar. What is poured into the cup? Wine. And what else? Water.⁴ But thou sayest to me:

¹ Another reading is *esse de tempore Melchisedech*, "that the Son of God is of the time of Melchizedek," which the editors explain as a reference to a sect mentioned by Epiphanius and Augustine, who held that M. was a heavenly power, superior to Christ. They appealed in support of their view to Heb. v. 10. The reading in the text seems preferable, the reference being to the Arian denial of the eternal Sonship.

² Heb. vii. 3.

³ Rev. i. 17.

⁴ The mixture of water with wine in the chalice is referred to by many early writers, beginning with Justin Martyr, and is commented on by Cyprian, *Ep.* lxiii.

“How then did Melchizedek offer bread and wine? What means the mixture of water? Hear the reason.

3. First of all, what does the type which was prefigured in the time of Moses tell us? That when the people of the Jews thirsted and murmured because they could not find water, God bade Moses touch the rock with his rod. He touched the rock and the rock poured forth a flood of water,¹ as the Apostle says, *But they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ.*² It was not an immovable Rock which followed the people. Drink thou also, that Christ may follow thee. Behold the mystery. Moses, that is to say, a prophet; the rod, that is the word of God. The priest touches the rock with the word of God, and the water flows and the people of God drink. Therefore the priest touches the cup, the water streams in the cup, *springs up into eternal life*,³ and the people of God drink, who have obtained the grace of God. This then thou hast learned.

4. Hear also another reason. At the time of the Lord's passion, when a great sabbath was nigh, because our Lord Jesus Christ was alive, or the robbers, men were sent to smite him; coming they found the Lord Jesus Christ dead; then one of the soldiers touched his side with his lance, and from his side water flowed and blood.⁴ Why water? why blood? Water to cleanse, blood to redeem. Why from his side? Because whence the guilt, thence the grace; guilt through woman, grace through the Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ Ex. xvii. 1-7; Numb. xx. 1-11.

² 1 Cor. x. 4. Cf. *de Myst.* viii. 49.

Jn. iv. 14.

⁴ Jn. xix. 31-34. Cf. *de Myst.* viii. 48.

CHAPTER II

The blessings of the sacrament illustrated from Canticles.

5. THOU hast come to the altar, the Lord Jesus calls thee or thy soul or the church and says, *Let her kiss me with the kisses of her mouth.*¹ Wouldst thou apply it to Christ? Nothing sweeter. Wouldst thou apply it to thy soul? Nothing pleasanter.

6. *Let her kiss me.* He sees that thou art clean from all sin because thy sins are purged away. Therefore he judges thee worthy of the heavenly sacrament and therefore he invites thee to a heavenly banquet. *Let her kiss me with the kisses of her mouth.*

7. Yet on account of what follows it is thy soul or human nature or the Church which, seeing itself cleansed from all sins, and worthy to be able to approach the altar of Christ (for what is the altar but the type of the body of Christ?),² has seen the wondrous sacraments and says, *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth*, that is, let Christ imprint a kiss on me.

8. Why? *Because thy breasts are better than wine.*³ That is, the sensations which thou suppliest are better—thy sacraments are better than wine:—than that wine which, though it hath sweetness, joy, agreeableness, yet therein is worldly joy, while in thee is spiritual pleasure. Even in those days Solomon represents the marriage of Christ and the Church or of the spirit and flesh and soul.

¹ Cant. i. 1. In §§ 5-7 the author interprets this in two ways. As the subject of *osculetur* ('let . . . kiss') is not expressed in the Latin, it may be interpreted either of Christ as the speaker, or of the Church (or individual soul, or mankind) as addressing Christ. In § 6 he takes Christ as the speaker. In § 7 he says that *propter sequentia*, "to suit the words which follow," it is better to take the soul (or human nature, or the Church) as the speaker. For the application of the imagery of Canticles to the Church or to the individual soul cf. *de Myst.* vii. 37 (note).

² Cf. iv. 2. 7 (note).

³ Cant. i. 1.

9. And we have further: *Thy name is an ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.*¹ Who are those virgins but the souls of individuals which have put off the old age of this body, being renewed through the Holy Spirit?

10. *Draw us; we will run after the fragrance of thy ointments.*² See what he says. Thou canst not follow Christ unless he himself draws thee. Therefore, that thou mayest know this: *When I am lifted up*, he says, *I will draw all unto me.*³

11. *The king hath brought me into his chamber.*⁴ The Greek text has "into his storehouse⁵ and into his cellar," where are good draughts, pleasant savours, sweet honey, divers fruits, varied foods, that thy banquets may be seasoned with numerous dishes.

CHAPTER III

Further illustrations of the blessings of Communion from Psalm xxiii. and from Canticles.

12. THEREFORE thou hast come to the altar, thou has received the body of Christ. Hear again what sacraments thou hast obtained. Hear holy David speaking. He too foresaw these mysteries in the spirit and rejoiced and said that he *lacked nothing.*⁶ Why? Because he that hath received the body of Christ shall never hunger.⁷

13. How often hast thou heard the twenty-second

¹ Cant. i. 2. Cf. *de Myst.* vi. 29.

² Cant. i. 3. Cf. *de Myst.* vi. 29.

³ Jn. xii. 32.

⁴ Cant. i. 3.

⁵ The LXX has *ταμείον*, which the author renders by the two words *promptuarium* and *cellarium*.

⁶ Ps. xxiii. (xxii. Vulg.) 1.

⁷ Jn. vi. 35. Cf. *de Myst.* viii. 48.

Psalm¹ and not understood? See how it is suited to the heavenly sacraments. *The Lord is my shepherd; and I shall not want. In a green pasture, there hath he made me to lie down. He hath tended me by the water of comfort, he converteth my soul. He hath led me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they have comforted me.*² Rod is rule, staff is passion; that is the eternal Divinity of Christ, but also his passion in the body. The one created, the other redeemed. *Thou hast prepared a table before me against them that trouble me. Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my inebriating cup how glorious it is.*³

14. Therefore thou hast come to the altar, thou hast received the grace of Christ, thou hast obtained the heavenly sacraments. The Church rejoices in the redemption of many and is glad with spiritual exultation that her white-robed household stand at her side.⁴ Thou hast this in the Song of Songs. In joy she calls Christ, having ready a feast which can seem worthy of heavenly banqueting. Therefore she says: *Let my brother come down into his garden and take the fruit of his fruit-trees.*⁵ What are his fruit-trees? Thou becamest a dry tree in Adam; but now through the grace of Christ thou hast budded into a fruitful tree.

15. The Lord Jesus willingly accepts and with heavenly condescension answers to his church. *I am come down,*

¹ The author follows the numbering of the Psalms in the Latin Version, which is also that of the LXX.

² Ps. xxiii. (xxii. Vulg.) 1-4.

³ Ps. xxiii. (xxii. Vulg.) 5. Cf. *de Myst.* viii. 43 (note).

⁴ A reference to the newly-baptized in their white robes. Cf. *de Myst.* vii. 34. The word *familia* (rendered "household") is of common occurrence in the prayers of the Western service-books.

⁵ Cant. v. 1. Cf. *de Myst.* ix. 56.

he says,¹ *into my garden ; I have gathered the vintage of myrrh with my ointments. I have eaten my bread with my honey and I have drunk my wine with my milk. Eat, he says, my brethren, and be drunk.*

16. *I have gathered the vintage of myrrh with my ointments.* What is that vintage? Learn the vine and you shall recognize the vintage. *Thou hast brought, he says, a vine out of Egypt,*² that is the people of God. Ye are the vine, ye are the vintage ; planted as a vine, as a vintage have ye given fruit. *I have gathered the vintage of myrrh with my unguents,* that is for the sweet savour which you have received.

17. *I have eaten my bread with my honey.* Dost thou see that in this bread there is no bitterness, but all is sweetness? *I have drunk my wine with my milk.* Dost thou see that the joy is of that kind which is not defiled with the stains of any sin? For as often as thou drinkest thou receivest remission of sins and art inebriated with the spirit. Whence also the Apostle says : *Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Holy Spirit.*³ For he who is drunk with wine staggers and reels : he who is inebriated with the Spirit is rooted in Christ. And therefore it is a glorious inebriation, which works sobriety of mind. This is what we briefly mention with respect to the sacraments.

CHAPTER IV

Exposition of the Lord's Prayer.

18. Now, what remains save prayer? And think not that it is a matter of little worth, to know how to pray.

¹ Cant. v. 1. Cf. *de Myst.* ix. 57, 58.

² Ps. lxxx. 8 (lxxix. 9, Vulg.).

³ Eph. v. 18. The reading "*Holy Spirit*" is also found in Ambrose, *de Noe et Arca*, 29.

The holy Apostles said to the Lord Jesus: *Lord teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.*¹ Then the Lord says a prayer, *Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily*² *bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. And let us not be led into temptation,*³ *but deliver us from evil.* Thou seest how short the prayer is and full of all excellencies! What grace in the first word!

19. O man, thou didst not dare to raise thy face to heaven, thou didst direct thine eyes to the earth, and suddenly thou didst receive the grace of Christ; all thy sins were forgiven. From a bad servant thou becamest a good son. Therefore be bold, not because of thy own action, but because of the grace of Christ. *For by grace are ye saved,*⁴ says the Apostle. Therefore there is no arrogance here, but faith; to proclaim what thou hast received is not pride, but devotion. Therefore raise thy eyes to the Father who has begotten thee through the laver, to the Father who has redeemed thee through the Son, and say *Our Father*. A good boldness⁵ that, but modest. Thou calledst him "Father" as a son; but do not claim anything specifically for thyself. He is the Father of Christ alone specially, he is Father of us all in common, because he begot him alone, us he created. Therefore say thou also through grace, *Our Father*, that

¹ Lk. xi. 1.

² *quotidianum*. So Vulgate in Lk., but *supersubstantialem* in Mt. (see § 24, note). In the following clause the author follows the version in Mt., reading *debita* ("debts").

³ The Old Latin version of this clause; found in Cyprian, *de Or. Dom.* 7, and still earlier in Tertullian. See Introd. p. xli.

⁴ Eph. ii. 8.

⁵ *praesumptio*. For the idea cf. the prologue to the Lord's prayer in the Roman Canon, *audemus dicere* ("we are bold to say"), which is found also in the Eastern rites, and is alluded to by Cyril of Jerusalem, Jerome, and others.

thou mayest deserve to be a son. Commend thyself by fixing thy looks and regards on the Church.¹

20. *Our Father, which art in heaven.* What is *in heaven*? Hear the scripture saying: *The Lord is high above all heavens.* And everywhere thou findest it written that *the Lord is above the heaven of heavens*,² as if there were not in heaven angels too, as if there were not in heaven dominations too,³ but in those heavens of which it was said: *The heavens declare the glory of God.*⁴ Heaven is there where guilt hath ceased, where crimes keep holiday. Heaven is where there is no stroke of death.

21. *Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.* What is *hallowed*? Is it as if we desired that he should be hallowed who says: *Ye shall be holy, for I am holy*,⁵ as if any hallowing could accrue to him from our prayer? Not at all. But may it be hallowed in us, that its hallowing may reach us.

22. *Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come.* As if the kingdom of God were not eternal. Jesus himself says: *To this end was I born*,⁶ and dost thou say to the Father, *Thy kingdom come*, as if it had not come? But the kingdom of God then comes, when you have obtained his grace. For he himself says: *The kingdom of God is within you.*⁷

¹ *i. e.* by using the words "*Our Father*," which implies the Church, we commend ourselves as members of it.

² In the former part of this passage the author has in mind Ps. cxiii. (cxii. Vulg.) 4, which is here freely rendered. The words "the Lord is above the heaven of heavens" appear to correspond to no single passage, but represent the sense of such passages as Ps. lvii. (lvi. Vulg.) 6; Ps. lxviii. 33 (lxvii. 34, Vulg.); 2 Chron. vi. 18 (cf. 2 Chron. ii. 6; 1 Kings viii. 27).

³ The passage is obscure, and the sense would be improved by reading "quasi non in caelis *ubi* et angeli, quasi non in caelis *ubi* et dominationes," implying that He is not in the heavens where the angels are, but in the higher heaven. The emphasis is on the fact that the Lord is "*above* the heavens."

⁴ Ps. xix. (xviii. Vulg.) 1.

⁵ Lev. xi. 44; xix. 2; xx. 7.

⁶ Jn. xviii. 37.

⁷ Lk. xvii. 21.

23. *Thy kingdom come ; thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. By the blood of Christ all things are set at peace, whether in heaven or on earth.*¹ Heaven is hallowed, the devil is cast down. The place of his resort is that place,² where is also the man whom he has deceived. *Thy will be done*, etc., i. e. let there be peace on earth as in heaven.

24. *Give us this day our daily bread.* I remember my sermon when I was dealing with the Sacraments.³ I said to you that before the words of Christ that which is offered is called bread : when the words of Christ have been uttered, it is no longer called bread, but is named body. Why then in the Lord's Prayer, which follows afterwards, does he say : *Our bread* ? He called it bread indeed, but he called it ἐπιούσιον,⁴ that is supersubstantial. It is not the bread which passes into the body, but that *bread of eternal life*,⁵ which supports the substance of our soul. Therefore in Greek it is called ἐπιούσιον. The Latin, however, calls this bread "daily" which the Greeks call "coming." For the Greeks call the coming day τὴν ἐπιούσαν ἡμέραν. Therefore what the

¹ Cf. Col. i. 20.

² Another reading is : *ubi versatur ? ubi et homo*. "Where does he resort ? There, where man is."

³ Cf. iv. 4. 14, 19 ; iv. 5. 25.

⁴ The reference of ἐπιούσιος to οὐσία ("essence," "being," "existence") is due to Origen (or one of his Alexandrian teachers), and descended from him to later commentators. The Old Latin Version (as all the older versions) adopts the other sense and renders *quotidianum* ("daily"). Jerome changed this to *supersubstantialem* in Mt., but retained *quotidianum* in Lk. The liturgical form is universally *quotidianum*. Cf. Lightfoot, *On a fresh revision of the N. T.* pp. 195 f. If the word *supersubstantialis* was due to Jerome, the fact furnishes a presumption that our author wrote after him. Here an Old Latin text of the prayer is used by the author ; accordingly, *quotidianum* alone is recognized as the actual current reading (T.). Ambrose discusses the interpretation of the word, and gives Origen's view in *de Fide*, iii. 5. 127. For Origen see *de Orat.* 27. The closest parallel, however, to this section is in Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* xxiii. 15.

⁵ Cf. Jn. vi. 48-50.

Latin and what the Greek text said seem both useful. The Greek indicated both in one expression,¹ the Latin said "daily."

25. If it is daily bread, why dost thou take it once a year,² as the Greeks in the East are accustomed to do? Take daily what is to profit thee daily. So live that thou mayest deserve to receive it daily. He who does not deserve to receive it daily, does not deserve to receive it once a year; as holy Job offered sacrifice daily for his sons, lest perchance they should have done any sin in heart or word.³ Therefore dost thou hear that as often as sacrifice is offered, the Lord's death, the Lord's resurrection, the Lord's ascension and the remission of sins is signified,⁴ and dost thou not take this bread of life daily? He who has a wound needs a medicine. The wound is that we are under sin; the medicine is the heavenly and venerable sacrament.

26. *Give us this day our daily bread.* If thou receivest daily, "this day" is "daily" to thee. If Christ is for

¹ The writer means that *ἐπιούσιον* is capable of a twofold interpretation. (1) "Bread which contributes to existence" (Origen), which the writer, like Origen, explains as that "which supports the substance of the soul." (2) "Bread for the coming day" (*τὴν ἐπιούσαν ἡμέραν*), which in the Latin Version is represented by *quotidianum* ("daily"). This latter rendering leads him to speak of "daily communion."

² Similarly Augustine (*de Serm. Dom. in monte*, ii. 7. 26) complains that many in the East do not communicate daily, though our Lord speaks of "daily bread." Chrysostom in several of his homilies complains of the neglect of communion at Constantinople, and in one passage (*in Heb.* xvii. 4) he asserts that many communicate once a year, others twice, others often. These strictures on Eastern practice may just possibly show an acquaintance on the part of the author with Chrysostom's writings, in which case they are a further indication of the date of *de Sacramentis*. Ambrose (*de Paenitentia*, ii. 9. 89) similarly refers to those who abstain from communion.

³ Job i. 5.

⁴ The writer is probably referring to the Anamnesis, the words of which he has quoted above (iv. 6. 27). For *elevatio* of the "ascension" cf. Acts i. 9 (Vulg.); *elevatus est*.

thee "this day," he rises again for thee "daily." How? *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.*¹ Therefore "this day" is when Christ rises again. *Yesterday and to-day he himself is,*² says the Apostle Paul. But in another place he says, *The night is far spent, the day is at hand.*³ Yesternight is far spent, the present day is at hand.

27. There follows: *Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.* What is the debt but sin? Therefore if thou hadst not borrowed money at interest, thou wouldst not now be in want; therefore sin is imputed to thee. Thou hast had money, wherewith thou wast born rich. Thou wast rich, being made in the image and likeness of God.⁴ Thou hast lost what thou hadst, that is humility; whilst thou desirest to indicate thy pride, thou hast lost money, thou hast become naked as Adam,⁵ thou hast accepted from the devil a debt which was not necessary. And therefore thou who wast free in Christ hast become a debtor to the devil. The enemy held thy bond, but the Lord crucified it, and blotted it out⁶ with his blood. He took away thy debt, he restored thy liberty.

28. Well, therefore, does he say: *And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.* Mark what thou sayest. As I forgive so do thou also forgive me. If thou hast forgiven, thou doest well in suing⁷ that it be forgiven thee. If thou dost not forgive, how canst thou sue him, that it may be forgiven thee?

29. *And let us not be led into temptation, but deliver us from evil.* Mark what he says: *And let us not be led into temptation* which we cannot endure.⁸ He doth not

¹ Ps. ii. 7.

² Heb. xiii. 8.

³ Rom. xiii. 12.

⁴ Gen. i. 26.

⁵ Gen. iii. 7.

⁶ Cf. Col. ii. 14.

⁷ *bene convenis.* Another reading is *bene convenit*, "it is right and proper that it be forgiven thee."

⁸ Cf. 1 Cor. x. 13. The words *quam ferre non possumus* ("which

say: "Lead us not into temptation," but as an athlete he wishes such a trial as human nature can bear: that each may be delivered *from evil*, that is from the foe, from sin.

30. But the Lord who has taken away your sin, and pardoned your faults, is mighty to defend and guard you against the wiles of the devil your adversary, that the foe who is wont to beget guilt may not creep upon you. But he who commits himself to God fears not the devil. For if *God is for us, who is against us?*¹ To him, therefore, be praise and glory from the ages and now, always, and for ever and ever.—AMEN.

we cannot endure") here are explanatory, and not a part of the Lord's Prayer, as the author quotes the full text of that prayer without them in v. 4. 18. But the words are found in some texts of the Lord's Prayer, and are quoted by Jerome, Hilary, and Ps. Aug., *Serm.* lxxxiv. For the reading "let us not be led" (*ne patiaris induci nos*) see note on v. 4. 18.

¹ Rom. viii. 31.

BOOK VI

CHAPTER I

The reality of the gift of Christ's flesh and blood in the sacrament is shown and illustrated from John vi.

1. As our Lord Jesus Christ is the true Son of God, not after the manner of men, through grace, but as a son of the essence of his father, so it is true flesh, as he himself said,¹ which we receive, and his true blood is our drink.

2. But perchance thou mayest say, what the disciples of Christ also said then when they heard him saying: *Unless a man eat my flesh and drink my blood, he shall not dwell in me, nor shall he have eternal life*²—perchance thou mayest say: "How are these things real? I who see the likeness, do not see the reality of blood."

3. First of all, I told thee of the word of Christ, which acts so that it can change and alter the appointed forms³ of nature. Then when the disciples of Christ endured not his saying, but hearing that he gave his flesh to eat and gave his blood to drink, they turned back; but Peter alone said: *Thou hast the words of eternal life, and how shall I withdraw from thee?*⁴ Accordingly, lest others should say this, feeling a shrinking from actual blood, and that yet the grace of redemption might

¹ Jn. vi. 55.

² The quotation is a conflation of Jn. vi. 53, 54, 56.

³ *genera instituta*. Some MSS. read "genera et instituta" (so Lanfranc). Erasmus has *instituta generalia*, "the general ordinances."

⁴ Jn. vi. 68 (quoted freely).

remain, therefore thou receivest the sacrament in a similitude, but truly obtainest the grace and virtue of the nature.¹

4. *I am*, says he, *the living bread which came down from heaven*.² But flesh did not come down from heaven, that is to say, he took flesh of the Virgin on earth. How then did bread come down from heaven, and that, too, living bread? Because our Lord Jesus Christ is alike a sharer both in divinity and body. And thou who receivest his flesh partakest of his divine essence in that food.

CHAPTER II

The sacraments show the operation of the Trinity and the equality of the Three Persons. Refutation of Arian teaching.

5. THEREFORE thou hast been taught about³ the sacraments, thou hast learnt all things most fully, because thou hast been baptized in the name of the Trinity. In all that we have done the mystery of the Trinity has been preserved. Everywhere Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one operation, one sanctification, though certain things seem to be as it were special.⁴

¹ The meaning is that, though the communicant receives the body of Christ "in a similitude" (*i. e.* under the forms of bread and wine), yet he no less truly receives the virtue of the reality, *i. e.* the body of Christ. The outward appearance of the bread is a "symbol," or "similitude," but it is a symbol of a "grace" and "virtue" which are truly received. The author, who has hitherto expressed himself in such realistic terms as to the conversion of the elements into the Body and Blood of Christ, here falls back upon the earlier language current in East and West and represented in the prayers of the Canon quoted by him in iv. 5. 21 ("the figure (*figura*) of the body and blood of Christ"). See *Intro.* pp. xviii, xxxvii.

² Jn. vi. 51. Cf. *de Myst.* viii. 47.

³ *accepistis de*. Another rendering is "thou hast received of" the sacraments. But the more natural phrase in that case would have been *accepistis sacramenta*.

⁴ *i. e.* to the different Persons of the Trinity.

6. How? It is *God* who *anointed* thee, and the Lord *signed* thee, and put the Holy Spirit in thy heart.¹ Thou hast therefore received the Holy Spirit in thy heart. Hear another truth, that as the Holy Spirit is in the heart, so also is Christ in the heart. How? Thou hast Christ saying this to his Church in the Song of Songs: *Set me as a seal in thy heart, as a seal upon thy arms.*²

7. Therefore God anointed thee, Christ signed thee. How? Because thou wast signed with the image of the cross itself unto his passion, thou receivedst a seal unto his likeness, that thou mayest rise unto his image, and live after His pattern, who was crucified to sin and *liveth to God.*³ And thy *old man* plunged into the font was *crucified* to sin, but rose again unto God.⁴

8. Then thou hast elsewhere a special work that, while God called thee, in baptism thou art as it were specially crucified with Christ.⁵ Then (as an instance of special operation) when thou receivest the spiritual seal, note that there is a distinction of persons, but that the whole mystery of the Trinity is bound up together.

9. Then what said the Apostle to thee, as was read the day before yesterday? *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are diversities of ministries, but the same Lord. There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.* All, says he, God worketh. These words, too, were read of the Spirit of God: *one and the same Spirit dividing to each as He wills.*⁷ Harken to the Scripture saying that the Spirit divides according to His own will, not in

¹ 2 Cor. i. 21, 22.

² Cant. viii. 6. Cf. *de Myst.* vii. 41, 42 for this and the following section.

³ Rom. vi. 10.

⁴ Rom. vi. 6.

⁵ Cf. Gal. ii. 19.

⁶ 1 Cor. xii. 4-6. Some MSS. read *mysteriorum* for *ministerium*. But the latter, which is an Old Latin reading, is found in the quotations of the passage by most of the Latin Fathers.

⁷ 1 Cor. xii. 11.

obedience to others. So then the Spirit divides to you grace as He wills, not as He is bidden, and chiefly so because He is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ. And hold fast this, that He is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit the Paraclete.

10. The Arians think that they derogate from the Holy Spirit, if they speak of Him as the Spirit the Paraclete. What does Paraclete mean but consoler? As though we did not read of the Father that He himself is the *God of consolation*.¹ Thou seest then that they think that an attribute, which pious affection proclaims, as showing the power of the eternal Father, must be derogatory to the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER III

How and where Christians ought to pray.

11. Now learn how we should pray. Many are the excellences of prayer. Where we should pray is no small matter, no small subject of inquiry. The Apostle says: *I desire that men should pray in every place, lifting up pure hands without wrath and disputing*.² And the Lord says in the Gospel: *But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy chamber, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy father*.³ Does not there seem to be a contradiction between the words of the Apostle, *Pray in every place*, and those of the Lord, *Enter into thy chamber and pray*? But there is no contradiction. Let us then clear up this point. Then, how thou shouldst begin prayer, under what system order its various parts, what subjoin,

¹ 2 Cor. i. 3.

² 1 Tim. ii. 8. Origen deals with the same passage in *de Orat.* 31.

³ Mt. vi. 6.

what state as petition,¹ how close the prayer, then for whom thou shouldst pray—all these we may discuss.

12. First, where thou shouldst pray. Paul seems to say one thing and the Lord another. Was it possible that Paul could teach anything contrary to the precepts of Christ? Surely not. Why? Because he is not the opponent, but the interpreter of Christ. *Be ye imitators*, he says, *of me, as I also of Christ*.² What then? Thou canst pray everywhere, and yet always pray in thy chamber. Everywhere thou hast thy chamber. Though thou be amidst the nations, amidst the Jews, thou hast everywhere thy secret place. Thy mind is thy chamber. Though thou be set in a multitude, yet in the inner man thou possessest thy place of secrecy and retirement.³

13. *But thou when thou prayest enter into thy chamber*. Well does he say *enter*; that thou mayest not pray like the Jew, to whom it is said: *This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me*.⁴ Let not then thy prayer proceed only from thy lips. Let the whole intention of thy mind be fixed, enter into the recess of thy heart, enter it with thy whole self. Let not him, whom thou wishest to please, see thee to be careless.⁵ Let him see that thou prayest from the heart, that when thou prayest from the heart he may deign to hear thee.

14. *But thou when thou prayest, enter into thy chamber*. In another place thou hast this too: *Go, my people, enter into thy secret places, shut thy door, hide thyself for a little, until the anger of the Lord be overpast*.⁶ This the

¹ *quo ordine distinguere, quid subtexere, quid allegare*. This is explained below, §§ 22-25. *Subtexere* ("subjoin") seems to correspond to the *obsecratio* or "supplication" in § 22; *allegare* to the *postulatio* ("petition"); see note on § 22. The question "for whom we should pray" is, however, never dealt with.

² 1 Cor. xi. 1.

³ Cf. *de Inst. Virg.* i. 7.

⁴ Mt. xv. 8; Mk. vii. 6.

⁵ *perfunctorium*.

⁶ Is. xxvi. 20.

Lord spake by the prophet, but in the Gospel he said : *But thou when thou prayest, enter into thy chamber, and, when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father.*

15. What is meant by "shutting the door"? Hear what door thou hast, which thou shouldest shut, when thou prayest. Would that the women would listen to this!¹ Thou hast heard it already. Holy David taught thee when he said : *Lord, set a guard upon my mouth and a door round about my lips.*² Elsewhere there is the door, which the Apostle Paul speaks of, when he says : *That the door of the word may be opened for me, to speak the mystery of Christ.*³ That is, when thou prayest, do not shout aloud, nor let thy prayer go forth abroad, nor noise it among the people. In thy privacy pray, sure that he can hear thee in private, who sees all things, hears all things. And pray in secrecy to thy Father, who hears thy secret prayers.

CHAPTER IV

On prayer in secret. Exposition of 1 Tim. ii. 8.

16. BUT let us ask why this is profitable, why we should rather pray in secrecy, than with loud calling. Hearken. Let us take an example from the usage of men. If thou art asking of a man, who hears quickly, thou dost not think that there is need of loud shouting. Thou askest softly in moderate tones. If thou askest of some deaf person, dost not thou begin to call aloud, that he may be able to hear thee? So then he who clamours thinks that God cannot hear him, unless he clamours. And in

¹ On this see Ambrose, *de Virginibus*, iii. 3. 11, where there is a similar injunction of silence in church.

² Ps. cxli. (cxl. Vulg.) 3.

³ Col. iv. 3. The reading "*aperiatur mihi ostium verbi*" is found in the writings of Ambrose.

asking Him thus he derogates from His power. But he who prays in silence shows his faith, and confesses that God is *the searcher of the heart and reins*,¹ and hears thy prayer before it is uttered by thy lips.

17. Let us then consider this—*I would that men should pray in every place*.² Why did he say “men”? Surely prayer is common both to men and women. I find no reason for this, unless indeed the holy Apostle said “men,” lest the women should be too forward and wrongly understand the words *in every place* and begin to clamour everywhere. Such women we cannot endure in the Church.

18. *I would that men*, that is those who can observe the precept, *should pray in every place, lifting up pure hands*. What is meant by *lifting up pure hands*? Oughtest thou in thy prayer to show forth the cross of the Lord to all and sundry?³ That indeed is a proof of thy piety,⁴ not of thy modesty. But it is possible for thee to pray, without displaying any outward figure, but lifting up thy actions. If thou wouldst have thy prayer⁵ effective, lift pure hands by thy innocence. Lift them not every day.⁶ Thou hast lifted them once for all; there is no need to lift them again.

19. *I would that men should pray in every place, lifting up pure hands without wrath and disputing*. Nothing can be truer. *Wrath*, it says, *destroys even the wise*.⁷

¹ Rev. ii. 23. Cf. Jer. xvii. 10; Ps. vii. 9 (11, Vulg.).

² 1 Tim. ii. 8.

³ The reference is to the hands outstretched in prayer, in which many Christian writers saw the symbolism of the Cross. Cf. Minucius Felix, *Octav.* 29, *crucis signum est . . . cum homo porrectis manibus deum pura mente veneratur.*

⁴ *virtutis*. Or the meaning may be “courage.”

⁵ *orationem*. Another reading is *operationem*.

⁶ The thought seems to be that the Christian at baptism enters on the life of innocence. This is “the lifting up of pure hands,” and this should not have to be repeated.

⁷ Prov. xv. 1 (LXX. Not in Heb. or Vulg.).

Therefore at all times, as far as is possible, a Christian man should control his anger, and especially when he comes to prayer. Let not the fierceness of wrath disturb thy mind, let not a kind of fury hinder thy prayer. But rather come with tranquil mind. For why wilt thou be angry? Has thy servant committed a fault? Thou comest to pray that thy faults may be forgiven thee, and thou art indignant with another! That is what is meant by "without wrath."

CHAPTER V

On the modesty which women ought to show in prayer. The parts of prayer are illustrated from 1 Tim. ii. 1. Application to the Lord's Prayer and Psalm viii. Conclusion.

20. Now as to "disputing." Often a man of business comes to prayer, or a covetous man. One thinks of money, the other¹ of gain, one of honour to be won, the other of avarice; and yet he thinks that God can hear him. And therefore when thou prayest, it is right that thou shouldest put divine things before human things.

21. *Likewise too I would that the women pray, not flaunting themselves in ornaments or in pearls*, says the Apostle Paul.² The Apostle Peter also says³: "The influence of a woman availeth much to turn the affections of her husband by the good conversation of his wife, and to convert the unbeliever to the grace of Christ." Such power has the grave demeanour and chastity of a wife and her good conversation to summon her husband to faith and devotion, and the same is often effected by the

¹ Or. we may render "another . . . another . . . another."

² The quotation is a very free citation of 1 Tim. ii. 9.

³ A free paraphrase of 1 Pet. iii. 1, 2.

words of a wise man. Therefore let a woman's *adornment*, he says, *not be in decking of the hair or braided locks, but in prayer from a pure heart*, where is the *hidden man of the heart, which is always rich in the sight of God*.¹ Thou hast, therefore, wherein thou mayest be rich. In Christ are thy riches, the badges of chastity and purity, faith, devotion, and mercy. *These are the treasures of righteousness*, as the prophet said.²

22. Next comes the question, what should be the beginning of prayer? Tell me, if you wished to make a request of a man and were to begin thus: "Come, grant me what I seek of thee," does not this seem an arrogant form of prayer?³ Prayer, therefore, should begin with the praise of God, that thou mayest ask of the almighty God, to whom all things are possible, who has the will to grant. Then follows the supplication, as the Apostle taught us when he said, *I beseech, therefore, that first of all prayers, supplications, petitions, giving of thanks be made*.⁴ The first part of the prayer, therefore, ought to contain the praise of God, the second the supplication, the third the petition, the fourth the giving of thanks. Thou shouldest not, like a starveling for food, begin with food, but with the praises of God.

¹ A conflation of passages from 1 Pet. iii. 3, 1 Tim. ii. 9 ("braided locks"), 2 Tim. ii. 22 ("those who call on the Lord from a pure heart").

² Is. xxxiii. 6 (LXX. The Heb. and Vulg. are different).

³ The whole of this passage appears to be modelled upon Ambrose, *de Inst. Virg.* ii. 8-10. In both the order of words in 1 Tim. ii. 1 is *orationes, obsecrationes* ("prayers, supplications"), which is reversed in the Vulgate. In both this order is essential to the argument. The *obsecratio* or *supplicatio* appears to be a general wish or aspiration for the favour of God, while the *postulatio* is a petition for certain definite things. In *de Sacram.* "hallowed be Thy name" is the *obsecratio* ("supplication"), while the rest of the prayer is *postulatio* ("petition"), the *gratiarum actio* ("giving of thanks") being represented by the doxology. In *de Inst. Virg.* ii. 10 it is said that the Lord's Prayer can be divided in this way, but the details are left to the intelligence of the reader.

⁴ 1 Tim. ii. 1. Cf. Origen, *de Orat.* 14.

23. Thus it is that your prudent public speakers have this rule that they court the favour of the judge. They begin with his praises, that they may have the goodwill of him who tries the case. Then he gradually begins to beg the judge to deign to listen to him patiently. Thirdly, he dares to put forward his petition, to set forth what he seeks. Fourthly, as he began with the praises of God, so he should end with praise.¹

24. Thou findest this in the Lord's prayer, *Our Father, which art in heaven*. It is an act of praise to God to declare Him a Father. Therein lies the glory that belongs to fatherly goodness. It is the praise of God, that he dwells in heaven, not on earth. *Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name*. That is, that he should hallow his servants. For his name is hallowed in us, when men are declared to be Christians. So then *Hallowed be thy name* shows a wish. *Thy kingdom come*—a petition that the kingdom of Christ be in us. If God reigns in us, the adversary cannot find a place. Guilt does not reign, sin does not reign. But virtue reigns, chastity reigns, devotion reigns. Then: *Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven*. *Give us this day our daily bread*. This petition is the chief of those things which are asked. *And forgive us*, he says, *our debts, as we also forgive our debtors*. Therefore daily receive,² that daily thou mayest ask forgiveness for thy debt. *And suffer us not to be led into temptation, but deliver us from evil*. What follows? Hearken what the priest says: "Through our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom, with whom, there is to thee honour, praise, glory, majesty, power, with the Holy Spirit, from all ages, both now and always and for ever and ever.—AMEN."³

¹ With this section cf. Origen, *de Orat.* 33.

² i.e. "receive that bread," a reference to the preceding petition.

³ This doxology resembles that found in the Greek liturgies (James, Mark, Basil, Chrysostom) at the close of the Lord's Prayer.

25. Another example. Though the Psalms of David are one book, possessing the excellences of prayer, which we have mentioned above, yet often too in a single psalm we find represented all these parts of prayer, as we see in the eighth psalm. Thus he begins as follows: *O Lord, our Lord, how wonderful is thy name in all the earth.*¹ So then we have the first part of the prayer.² Then the supplication. *For I shall behold thy heavens, the works of thy fingers, that is, I shall behold the heavens, the moon and the stars which thou hast founded.* He surely does not mean, I shall see the sky, but I shall see the heavens, in which celestial grace and splendour begin to shine. These heavens then the prophet promised should be given to him, since he deserved³ celestial grace from the Lord. *The moon and the stars which thou hast founded.* He calls the Church the moon, and the saints shining with celestial grace he calls the stars.⁴ Then observe his petition: *What is man that thou are mindful of him, or the*

A similar doxology forms the conclusion of the Canon, and precedes the Lord's Prayer in the Ambrosian Sacramentary of Biasca (cent. x.), and also occurs in this latter position in the Roman Canon (*Gelasian Sacramentary*, Wilson, p. 236). In this respect the rite with which the author was familiar corresponded with the Greek rites mentioned above, and the position of the doxology in the Sacramentary of Biasca may be due to a later rearrangement. From its liturgical use the doxology passed into the text of Mt. vi. 13.

¹ Psalm viii. i f. With the exposition which follows cf. Ambrose, *de Inst. Virg.* ii. 9.

² Or "the prayer proper comes first," *oratio* signifying the opening of praise. This seems to be the use in *de Inst. Virg.* ii. 9, *hactenus oratio: inde sequitur obsecratio*. It must be remembered that *oratio* would suggest any speech, as well as prayer.

³ *mereretur*. The reading of the Benedictine edd. *mererentur* cannot be right.

⁴ Cf. Keble, *Christian Year* (Septuagesima):

The Moon above, the Church below,
A wondrous race they run

The Saints, like stars, around His seat,
Perform their courses still.

*son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels, thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thy hands. Then there is another thanksgiving: Thou hast put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field.*¹

26. We have taught, so far as we could grasp them, truths which perhaps we have not learned, and we have set them forth as far as we were able. May your holiness,² informed by priestly training, labour to hold fast what it has received from God. And may that oblation, like a pure victim, always find in you its seal, that you yourselves may be able to attain to grace and the rewards of virtue by our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom is glory, honour, praise, everlastingness, from the ages, and now, and always, and for ever and ever.—AMEN.

¹ It is difficult to see, in the above interpretation of Psalm viii., in what sense the words "I shall behold the heaven" and "What is man . . . that thou visitest him?" can be regarded as "prayers." The explanation, perhaps, is that the former verse is taken to refer to the future establishment of the true heaven, *i. e.* that in which Christ is the sun, and the Church the moon; while the latter verse foreshadows the humiliation and exaltation of Christ. These verses, in the author's view, were prophecies of David, but, as they lay in the future, they were also aspirations, and therefore, in a sense, prayers. The lines of Keble, quoted in the preceding note, and the use of Ps. viii. as a proper Psalm for Ascension Day, are an echo of some of the ideas propounded in this section. In the author's interpretation, the opening ascription of praise is the *oratio* (or "prayer"). The words "I shall behold the heaven, the moon and the stars" are the *obsecratio* ("supplication"); while the words "What is man . . . works of Thy hands" are the *postulatio* ("petition"). The words "Thou hast put all things . . . beasts of the field" form the concluding thanksgiving. In *de Inst. Virg.* ii. 9, Ambrose gives a similar interpretation of the psalm, though in a more intelligible form. The opening of praise is the same, though more of it is quoted; but the *obsecratio* is found in the words "that thou mayst destroy the enemy and the avenger." The words, "I shall behold," etc., are interpreted in the same way as here, but are regarded as the *postulatio*; while the rest of the psalm, beginning "What is man," forms the concluding thanksgiving.

² On this expression see note on i. 6. 24.

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